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ABSTRACT

In less than five years, the California State Library-sponsored InFoPeople project connected 46% of California's public libraries to the Internet and established a highly regarded, sustained training program to assist librarians in taking advantage of the new networked resources and services. The primary objective of this Stage II report was to conduct site visits at selected InFoPeople public libraries in the various regional planning areas throughout the state. Findings from the site visits and interviews that are presented in this report cover the following areas: public access to the Internet at public libraries throughout the state; impact of InFoPeople training; utility of the community plan requirement; utility of the community partner requirement; key impacts on library users and communities; key impacts on library operations and services; impact of InFoPeople's "Librarian's Index to the Internet"; future high impact information technology applications for public libraries; next steps for leveling the public library information technology playing field; and InFoPeople operations and services. Issues and recommendations for future InFoPeople directions are also presented. Appendices include the schedule of onsite evaluation interviews, profiles of libraries visited, the letter scheduling onsite visit and requesting information, and a profile of InFoPeople. (AEF)

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ED 430 576

THE IMPORTANCE OF CALIFORNIA PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN INCREASING PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE INTERNET:

FINDINGS FROM THE INFOPEOPLE SITE VISITS

Stage II Final Report Presented to:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In August 1998 the investigators initiated a study that had the broad purpose of assessing the California State Library (CSL)-sponsored InFoPeople project. To summarize, the achievements of the InFoPeople project are remarkable. In less than five years, InFoPeople connected 46% of California's public libraries to the Internet. InFoPeople established a highly regarded, sustained training program to assist librarians in taking advantage of the new networked resources and services. This program is a model for the rest of the state libraries in the nation. Without this project the Internet would not be as widely or as effectively used in California public libraries as it is today. The InFoPeople project revitalized the image the public has of libraries and reinvigorated library professionals who had watched while interest in public library services waned. InFoPeople's success, however, has created numerous opportunities for the State Library and InFoPeople to consider. This report lays the groundwork for a concerted statewide strategic planning effort to maximize the impacts and benefits from these rich new opportunities.

The evaluation effort was organized into two stages. The study team completed a Stage I report in February 1999 that:

- Analyzed existing statistics and data about the InFoPeople project and its impact on services provided by libraries; and,
- Delivered statistical and other measurement tools to the California State Library to be implemented at a later date for continued evaluation of the InFoPeople project and its impact on services provided by libraries in California.

The Stage I report entitled, *InFoPeople Surveys and Quarterly Statistics: Preliminary Findings* (Bertot, McClure, and Rubin, 1999) is available at <http://www.infopeople.org/Proj/eval/index.html>.

The present Stage II portion began in January 1999. The primary objective for Stage II was to conduct site visits at selected InFoPeople public libraries in the various regional planning areas throughout the state. The evaluators made site visits from February 20 to March 3, 1999 that included:

- Site visits to six California libraries or library systems who participated in the InFoPeople Project;
- A site visit to the State Library to interview personnel with oversight or familiarity with the InFoPeople project conducted by one of the study team;
- Interviews with InFoPeople staff conducted by all of the study team; and,
- Telephone interviews on March 11-12, 1999 with five libraries that did not participate in the InFoPeople project conducted by one of the study team.

The study team conducted a total of 122 interviews with library users, library staff, librarians, local officials, State Library officials and InFoPeople staff.

The investigators devised a set of research areas to examine at the site visit libraries including: identification of the principal benefits of the project for public libraries, their communities, InFoPeople, and the State Library; the utility of the community plan and community partner requirements; the usefulness of the *Librarians Index to the Internet*; the impacts on library operations; the utility of the training offered by InFoPeople; and the identification of possible next steps for InFoPeople and the State Library. In addition, the study team interviewed by telephone a small sample of public libraries that did not participate in the InFoPeople project to find out: were they presently connected to the Internet and why they had not participated in the InFoPeople project. The evaluators chose these areas to elicit the benefits and impacts of the InFoPeople project that might suggest future programmatic directions for both InFoPeople and the State Library.

Findings from the site visits and telephone interviews presented in Chapter 2 of this report cover the following areas:

- Public access to the Internet is offered at public libraries throughout the state: In less than five years, InFoPeople connected 46% of California's public libraries to the Internet;
- Impact of InFoPeople training activities: InFoPeople established a highly regarded, sustained training program to assist librarians in taking advantage of the Internet. This program is a model for the rest of the state libraries in the nation. Without this project, the Internet would not be as widely or as effectively used in California public libraries as it is today;
- Utility of the community plan requirement: For the first time, libraries were asked to plan in a systematic, structured manner, for the introduction of a new digital service;
- Utility of the community partner requirement: For the first time, libraries were asked to plan for and give the community designated roles to play in support of the libraries' new digital services;
- Key impacts on library users and communities: The InFoPeople project redefined the community's view of public libraries. Support for public libraries and their Internet service is at its highest in more than a decade;
- Key impacts on library operations and services: Library public services have been revitalized and transformed. In many cases, over half of reference collection expenditures are for digital products. Technical services has moved from acquiring and cataloging books to selecting, procuring, and maintaining the latest information technologies;
- Impact of InFoPeople's *Librarians' Index to the Internet*: Every reference librarian interviewed uses this "life-saving" source. But perhaps more important, is the model the *Librarians' Index* offers for how to effectively organize talented librarians to cooperatively solve shared public library problems;
- Future high impact information technology applications for public libraries: The report identifies the next set of potential information technologies that may transform California's public libraries in the near future;
- Next steps for leveling the public library information technology playing field: Telephone interviews with a small group of non- participants in the InFoPeople project suggest that the State Library may be closer than it thinks to providing minimum public access to the Internet from every public library; and,
- InFoPeople operations and services examined: InFoPeople is a lean, three person, virtual office that maximizes the use of staff (by hiring high quality part time trainers), space (by contracting with libraries throughout the state for training facilities), and equipment (by letting local libraries purchase their own equipment if it meets certain minimum standards). InFoPeople may well need to expand this model as it redefines what it does. The State Library should take a closer look at the InFoPeople model for possible applications throughout the State Library.

The findings presented in Chapter 2 suggest a range of potential actions for both InFoPeople and the State Library. But not all of them are of equal importance, nor may all of them be achieved in the next fiscal year.

Chapter 3 presents issues and recommendations for future InFoPeople activities. The central issue facing the State Library is that of creating, managing, implementing, maintaining, and coordinating technology initiatives that have the ability to:

- Provide a sophisticated technology and connectivity infrastructure;
- Support the development and evolution of electronic networked services and content;
- Maximize the benefits of connectivity to the citizens of California while minimizing the costs of such services; and,
- Stimulate creativity and innovation in the library community to participate in the building of California's digital infrastructure.

The recommendations provided in this chapter serve as a frame of reference for the State Library to use as the library considers the future technology needs of the state's libraries and user communities. The InFoPeople project has opened the door for a range of new program initiatives and opportunities throughout the state. A concerted statewide strategic planning effort can maximize the impacts and benefits from these rich new opportunities.

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The authors wish to acknowledge the assistance of a number of people, without whose help this report could not have been completed.

Of special mention is the guidance, assistance, and handling of a range of site visits by the project liaison, Holly Hinman. Holly graciously provided the authors with a significant amount of time, expertise, and suggestions that improved the overall success of the study and of the two reports generated by the study. We especially appreciate her help in assisting us to arrange the site visits, establish contacts with local librarians, and review various project documents.

We also wish to acknowledge the support and assistance of Mark Parker who served as the project's liaison at the California State Library. Mark offered a number of important insights and ideas about conducting the study that significantly improved the various study products. We especially appreciated his ability to provide the study team with the "big picture" as to activities and developments in the state as this project was being completed.

There are also a number of staff with the InFoPeople project itself who helped the study team by providing them with project data, clarifying the organization and operations of InFoPeople activities, and providing us with time for what probably seemed an endless list of questions. These staff include Cheryl Gould and Carole Leita.

At the various site libraries, the Directors all are to be acknowledged for allowing us to visit their library and meet with staff, users, and local officials. These Library Directors include: José Aponte, Marie Bryan, Diane Duquette, Margaret Miles, and Waynn Pearson. We would also like to thank Joy Cadone for all of her assistance. These individuals were especially gracious in working with us on the project and we greatly appreciate their time and assistance.

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While we appreciate the help and assistance from the people identified above, we also realize that we alone are responsible for the content and recommendations offered in this report. Nonetheless, the assistance of these people, and others, was greatly appreciated by the authors.

John Carlo Bertot
Charles R. McClure
Joe Ryan
June 1999

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY i

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS iii

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION 1

BACKGROUND 1

PROJECT APPROACH 2
Stage I 2
Review of Stage I Findings 3
Stage II 3

ORGANIZATION OF THIS REPORT 5

CHAPTER 2: FINDINGS FROM SITE VISITS 6

INTRODUCTION 6

METHOD 7
Research Questions 7
Site Selection 8
Document Collection and Analysis 8
Interviews 9
Analysis 9
Efforts to Ensure Data Quality 9

FINDINGS 11

Principal Benefits of the InFoPeople Project 11
Provided Public Access to the Internet throughout California 11
Reduced of the Digital Divide in California 12
Improved Information Literacy 12
Promoted the Library to the Center of Local Community Services 12
Altered and Improved Library Collections and Services 13
Fostered Local Creation of Local Information for Worldwide Use 14
Fostered the Development of Electronic Commerce Locally 14
Leveraged New and Enhanced Partnerships and Funding 14
Increased Pride in Local Communities 15
Enhanced the State Library's Reputation among Local Public Libraries 15
Next Steps for InFoPeople and the State Library 15
California Citizens 15
California Legislature and the Governor's Staff 16
California State Agencies 16
California Information Technology Industry 16
California Public Librarians 16

Utility of the Community Plan Requirement 18
Project Planning and Management 18
Next Steps for InFoPeople and the State Library 19

Utility of the Community Partner Requirement 20
Roles Played by Community Partners 20
Why Community Partners Participated 21
Community Partners Recruitment and Characteristics 21
Community Partner - Library Relations 21
Next Steps for InFoPeople and the State Library 22

Key Impacts of the Internet Service on Library Users and Communities 24
Who are the Users of the New Internet Service at the Libraries Visited? 24
What Are the Types of Internet Services Users Want? 24
What is the Typical User Experience? 26
What Areas of Interest Do Internet Service Users Have at the Libraries Visited? 26
Users Who Help Other Users: Library Internet Docents 27
What Users' Want, at Least at the Sites Visited? 27
Next Steps for InFoPeople and the State Library 28
Identify New Users and New Service Needs 28
Prioritize New Services and Eliminate Unnecessary Old Services 28
Encourage Public Libraries to Plan for New Internet Services Now 28
Establish Effective Public Library Internet Docent Programs 29
Cooperatively Develop Web-based Resources to Address Common New User Needs 29

Key Impacts on Library Operations and Services 30
Impacts on Public Library Administration 30
Planning 30
Training 30
Facilities Management 31
Budget and Finance 31
Policy 32
Library Branches 33
Community Relations and Strategic Partnerships 34
Evaluation 35
Impacts on Public Services 35
Collections: From Paper to Digital, from Limited to Expanding 36
From Question Answering to User Training 36
Accompanied by Annoying Distractions 36
Staff Seeking Training to Keep Up 38
Need for Reference Desk Computers 38
Integrating the Library's Collections 39
Computer Savvy Users 39
Impacts on Technical Services 39
Procurement Delay Reduction 40
Repair Delay Reduction 41
Information Technology Skill Upgrades 42
Information Technology Management 42
Information Technology Planning 43
Direct Information Technology Advice and Assistance 45
Next Steps for InFoPeople and the State Library Related to Library Operations 45
Public Library Administration 45
Public Services Operation 46
Technical Services Operation 47

Impact of InFoPeople's *Librarians' Index to the Internet* 48

Impact of InFoPeople Training Activities 49
Scope of InFoPeople Training Activities 49
InFoPeople Training Highly Regarded 51
Offer Training in More Locations 52
Offer Targeted Training, Consider New Groups 52
Offer Training in New Areas 54
Consider Post-Training Uses, Support Them More Fully 55
Continue to Provide Incentives for Training 56
Next Steps: Introduce the Next Level of InFoPeople Training 57

The Next High Impact Applications for California Public Libraries 58

Snapshots of Libraries Who Did Not Participate in the InFoPeople Project 60
Introduction 60
Results 60
Small Southern Coastal California Public Library (3 outlets) 60
Small Rural Southeastern California Library (2 outlets) 60
Small Northwest California Public Library (4 outlets) 61
Small Rural Northwest Mountain California Public Library (3 outlets) 61
Conclusions 62
Connections 62
InFoPeople Non Participation 62
Next Steps 63
Future Prospects 64
Leveling the Playing Field 64

InfoPeople Operations and Services Examined 65

State Library View of InFoPeople Activities 67
Introduction 67
Findings 67
Administration and Management of InFoPeople 67
InFoPeople Budget 68
Role of the State Library 69
Benefits of InFoPeople 69
Issues and Barriers 70
Future Directions for InFoPeople 71

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS 72

CHAPTER 3: ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE INFOPEOPLE DIRECTIONS 73

INTRODUCTION 73

RECOMMENDATIONS, OPTIONS, AND STRATEGIES 73

Variations on the Current InFoPeople Project 75
Maintain the Current Program 75
Awards-based Cycles 75
A New and Flexible InFoPeople 79
SWAT Team for Non-participating Libraries 79

Technical Assistance and Training 79
Concentrate on Training 79
Introduce the Next Level of InFoPeople Training 80
Develop Local Training Centers 81
Training Vouchers 81
Customized Training and Technical Support Entrepreneur 81
Redesigning InFoPeople 81
Support the Library of California and Other Technology Initiatives 82
Expand Digital and Network-Based Resources 82
Statewide Data Coordinator, Collector, and Reporter 83
Collaborate with Other State Programs and Agencies 84
Subsume InFoPeople into Other State Library Activities 84
Fold InFoPeople into Other State Library Projects 84

IMPORTANCE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING 84

MOVING FORWARD 85

REFERENCES 87

APPENDICES 89

Appendix 2-1 Schedule of Onsite Evaluation Interviews 89
Appendix 2-2 Brief Profiles of Libraries Visited 92
Appendix 2-3 Letter Scheduling Onsite Visit and Requesting Information 100
Appendix 2-4 Brief Profile of InFoPeople 105

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The InFoPeople project provides significant benefits to the residents in the state of California by promoting public access to the Internet via public libraries. Indeed, as this final report will document, the benefits and impacts that result from the project are significant for California residents, local communities, public libraries, and public librarians.

The InFoPeople project continues to serve as a catalyst that makes it possible for a number of local communities to have access to the Internet and its broad array of resources and services. Indeed, a number of communities might not otherwise have access to the Internet were it not for the InFoPeople project's direct support, provision for the purchase of computers in local public libraries, and professional training to support the librarians.

The success of the InFoPeople project in areas of providing access to the Internet via public libraries, training librarians in a range of information technology and services topics, and promoting local community development is a significant first step. Based on the success of this "first step" the InFoPeople project can evolve to: better promote public access to the Internet and the global networked environment, enhance network literacy among California residents, and move the state to be successful in the evolving networked-based economy.

State Library staff, policymakers, librarians, and others will need to consider some new directions and possible strategies to build on the project's current strengths and move InFoPeople successfully into the new millennium.

BACKGROUND

In August 1998 the investigators initiated a study that had the broad purpose of assessing the California State Library (CSL)-sponsored project, InFoPeople. The InFoPeople project is an effort sponsored by the CSL and funded by the Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA), the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), and local library funds. The purpose of InFoPeople is to enhance access to information resources by providing points of public access to the Internet in public libraries throughout the state of California. Additional detail about the InFoPeople project, its objectives, and activities can be found on its Website at <http://www.infopeople.org/>.

The evaluation effort served as an initial assessment of the InFoPeople initiative that will provide the CSL with baseline data on the value, use, and impact of the project on various California user communities throughout the state, and in the development of new project directions. In particular, the evaluation project as originally conceived had the following goals:

1. Compile and evaluate statistical information collected by the InFoPeople project:

- Collate, organize, analyze, and report existing statistical data that has been collected describing various InFoPeople services, programs, and activities;
- Make recommendations as to how the current and future data collection activities and tools can be improved and integrated into ongoing InFoPeople and CSL statistics; and,
- Develop measurement devices that the California State Library can use in the future to maintain ongoing or periodic assessment of the InFoPeople project;

2. Compile and evaluate information about InFoPeople users and the InFoPeople project:

- Identify primary and secondary user groups of the InFoPeople project;
- Measure the nature and extent of use of the InFoPeople project for the primary and secondary user groups;
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the training programs;
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the Community Plan component; and,

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the Community Partner component.

3. Make recommendations regarding future project activities:

- Recommend refinements and modifications to the InFoPeople project to more closely meet the needs of its users;
- Identify targeted populations for specialized projects or new program directions (e.g., geographic, non-public library, ethnic/cultural); and,
- Identify criteria whereby the InFoPeople program can be considered completed, at the individual library and on a statewide basis.

Overall, the intent of the evaluation project was to provide the CSL, the public library community, and state and local policymakers with information that would help them determine the overall success of the InFoPeople project and offer suggestions for the project's development.

PROJECT APPROACH

The evaluation effort was organized into two stages. Each stage had a range of activities and project products.

Stage I

The study team completed the Stage I report in February 1999. Originally, Stage I had the following activities:

(1) Analyze existing statistics and data

- Identify the various data sets that have been and are being collected and maintained that describe activities, programs, and services related to the InFoPeople project;
- Develop a database that integrates these data into a coherent and organized means for access and analysis;
- Provide an electronic copy of that database to the California State Library, using one or more applications from the Microsoft Office '97; and,
- Produce a report that describes and analyzes the data, provides an overview of the statistics and what they mean, and makes recommendations for the future development and maintenance of the database.

(2) Deliver statistical and other measurement tools to the California State Library to implement at a later date for continued evaluation of the InFoPeople project and its impact on services provided by libraries in California:

- Initially develop, modify, and finalize measurement tools in conjunction with Library Development Services and InFoPeople staff. These tools will survey primary InFoPeople clients (e.g., library staff, community partners) and secondary InFoPeople clients (e.g., library patrons who use InFoPeople workstations).

All activities identified in (1) above were completed and are discussed in the Stage I final report *InFoPeople Surveys and Quarterly Statistics: Preliminary Findings* (Bertot, McClure, and Rubin, 1999), available at <http://www.infopeople.org/Proj/eval/index.html>. Work was completed in Stage II to develop measurement tools as described in (2) above.

It is also important to note that a major change to Stage I activities included the administration and analysis of a survey to all InFoPeople site contacts. Originally intended as part of Stage II, the study team administered this

survey in Stage I to inform the site visits and other data collection efforts so that these visits would be more useful in addressing the evaluation goals outlined above. Furthermore, there was a sense that data from these surveys would be useful to InFoPeople administrators in short-term project development – especially in the area of training and Cycle 4 developments. The Stage I report, *InFoPeople Surveys and Quarterly Statistics: Preliminary Findings* (Bertot, McClure and Rubin, 1999), available at <http://www.infopeople.org/Proj/eval/index.html>, provides a detailed discussion of the findings from the statewide survey.

Review of Stage I Findings

The Stage I report presented an initial set of findings and issues related to the InFoPeople project. More specifically, the report presented findings regarding:

- The reformatting of the quarterly and user surveys to include the development of scripts to migrate data from these surveys into analytical tools such as Excel;
- Analysis of data contained in these two surveys with a discussion of issues affecting how such data might be better collected, managed, and analyzed in the future; and,
- A survey administered to all InFoPeople site contacts during September 1998.

The various data contained in the InFoPeople user surveys and quarterly reports were scripted to be accessed through Excel (or other tools) to better analyze data being collected via these instruments. Copies of these scripts were included in the Stage I report and have been disseminated to project participants and others via the InFoPeople Website. Members of the InFoPeople project staff performed additional scripting to assist the study team analyze the quarterly statistics data.

Results from a survey distributed to all InFoPeople site contacts during September 1998 suggest that there are a number of key issues that affect the overall success and future direction of the project. For example, there is evidence that InFoPeople contacts believe there is significant impact from the project in terms of improved community access to the Internet. In addition, there is some evidence that, where the InFoPeople project site had a high level of involvement from the community liaison, there was greater project impact.

Library site contacts also reported on the high quality and overall success of the training provided by InFoPeople staff as well as the extensive support services provided by these staff. Many of the survey participants noted a range of impacts and benefits that resulted from participation in the project. These and other findings are detailed in the Stage I report available at <http://www.infopeople.org/Proj/eval/index.html>.

Stage II

The study team began the Stage II portion of the project in January 1999 and completed it in May 1999. The primary objective for Stage II was to conduct site visits at selected InFoPeople public libraries in the various regional planning areas throughout the state. Chapter 2 provides details regarding the selection of these libraries and other issues related to method.

The site visits were important means for obtaining data to assist the evaluators answer a range of evaluation questions regarding the project. Figure 1-1 summarizes the areas of evaluation emphasis during the site visits conducted in Stage II. Some of the areas outlined in Figure 1-1 also were addressed in Stage I through the statewide survey. Chapter 3 will incorporate the findings from Stage I with the findings reported in this study to suggest future directions for the InFoPeople project.

Figure 1-1. Primary Areas for Evaluation Emphasis During Stage II.	
Primary Evaluation Areas	**Desired Evaluation Data**
InFoPeople Project Benefits and Impacts for the Public Library	• The impact of the InFoPeople project on the public library in terms of factors such as: ➢ Provision of basic reference services ➢ Provision of document delivery services ➢ Instruction and technical assistance ➢ Geographic regions within the state ➢ Assessment of whether the role of libraries has changed in relation to local government. • Assessment of the impact of the InFoPeople project on library staff, administration, and trustees in terms of: ➢ Staff development and/or continuing education ➢ Staff allocation ➢ Policies (service and access).
InFoPeople Próject Benefits to Users	• Identifying InFoPeople user communities and the methods through which the user groups became aware of InFoPeople. • Interviewing a cross-section of selected InFoPeople communities to determine the level of involvement of such communities with InFoPeople to: ➢ Specify systemic use of InFoPeople including, but not limited to, reference interactions, point of use instruction, and integration into the workplace ➢ Compare and contrast the use of InFoPeople across the five networking regions in the state.
Measurement and Evaluation tools for the California State Library to Implement at a Later Date for Continued Evaluation of the InFoPeople Project	• Develop, modify, and finalize measurement devices in conjunction with Library Development Services staff.
Provide an Executive Briefing Session to Selected California State Library personnel Regarding Project Findings and Recommendations	

The activities identified in Figure 1-1 provide a rich set of data and findings which, with Stage I findings, combine to achieve the evaluation's objectives and will assist the CSL in ongoing InFoPeople planning efforts. It should be remembered that CSL staff and the investigators agreed that evaluation activities would stress evaluation of services, users, and uses related to the InFoPeople project and *not* the technology infrastructure or financial matters related to the project. Thus, collection of such data at the sites was not emphasized. The site visits reported here were especially productive due to the range of participants involved in the visits as well as their generous contribution of time and energy in meeting with the evaluators.

ORGANIZATION OF THIS REPORT

As suggested earlier in this Chapter, this report has the following objectives:

- Reporting findings from Stage II evaluation activities as a result of the site visits;
- Describing and reporting the measurement and assessment techniques used in Stage II;
- Integrating site visit findings with the findings from Stage I; and,
- Suggesting future directions and possible next steps by which the success of the InFoPeople project can continue.

This report provides the CSL with substantial information for discussion and incorporation into InFoPeople planning activities.

Chapter 1 provides an introduction and background information regarding the evaluation project. The evaluation approach included two Stages, the second of which is reported here – the first reported at <http://www.infopeople.org/Proj/eval/index.html>. Chapter 2 details the evaluation approach taken to conduct the site visits and presents a range of findings intended to address the areas described in Figure 1-1. Appendices for Chapter 2 detail the method and provide a number of measurement and assessment techniques that the CSL can adapt and use in future InFoPeople evaluations. Chapter 3 integrates findings from the Stage I report with findings from the site visits and offers conclusions, key issues, and possible next steps upon which to continue the success of the InFoPeople project.

CHAPTER 2: FINDINGS FROM SITE VISITS

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the study team presents findings from February 20 to March 3, 1999 site visits to California that include:

- Site visits to six California libraries or library systems who participated in the InFoPeople Project. Study team members Charles R. McClure and Joe Ryan visited Oceanside Public Library, Cerritos Public Library, and Kern County Library system. Study team members John Carlo Bertot and Joe Ryan visited Alameda County Library system, Woodland Public Library and Plumas County Library system;
- A site visit to the State Library to interview personnel with oversight or familiarity with the InFoPeople project conducted by one of the study team;
- Interviews with InFoPeople staff conducted by all of the study team; and,
- Telephone interviews on March 11-12, 1999 with five libraries that did not participate in the InFoPeople project conducted by one of the study team.

The study team conducted a total of 122 interviews with library users, library staff, librarians, local officials, State Library officials and InFoPeople staff. See Appendix 2-1 for a complete onsite visit itinerary. See Appendix 2-2 for brief profiles of the libraries visited. The study team wants to publicly thank all of those interviewed, in particular the InFoPeople Project Coordinator, State Library liaison, and the site liaisons for giving so much of their time and thought to this evaluation.

The next section briefly describes the method used to obtain the findings. The findings highlight broad themes and potential next steps for InFoPeople that emerged from the site visits and telephone interviews. Covered are:

- Principal benefits of the InFoPeople project;
- Utility of the Community Plan requirement;
- Utility of the Community Partner requirement;
- Key impacts from the InFoPeople project on library users and communities;
- Key impacts from the InFoPeople project on library operations and services;
- Impact of InFoPeople's *Librarians' Index to the Internet*;
- Impact of InFoPeople's training activities;
- Snapshots of libraries who did not participate in the InFoPeople project;
- InfoPeople operations and services; and,
- State Library view of InFoPeople activities.

The chapter ends with a summary and conclusions. This findings section will present a substantial number of ideas and options for the State Library and InFoPeople to consider.

METHOD

The site visit and telephone interview phase of the evaluation of the InFoPeople project follows a remote analysis of the project summarized in the Stage I Report (McClure, Bertot, Rubin, 1998). This report summarized the analysis of existing documentation, evaluative data collected by InFoPeople, and a user survey conducted by the study team. The site visit phase involved identification of research questions, selection of sites, examination of existing documentation, individual and group onsite interviews, telephone interviews and e-mail follow up, and analysis of the data collected.

Research Questions

The study team devised the following research questions to direct to the libraries visited that participated in the InFoPeople project:

- How useful was the community partner requirement to participating libraries?
- How useful was the community plan requirement to participating libraries?
- Were there benefits for the local library due to the InFoPeople project?
- Does the community view the library differently as a result of the library's Internet services?
- What is the local library's assessment of community support for Internet services and for the library?
- What were the impacts on library operations as a result of the introduction of the Internet service?
- What were the impacts on the community?
- What measures do library administrators use to evaluate their public access Internet service?
- How useful was the training offered by InFoPeople?
- What next steps do local libraries plan to take related to the Internet?
- What next steps should InFoPeople take to assist local libraries?

The study team presents the responses to these research questions in several sections below.

In addition, the study team devised the following research questions to direct to selected libraries that did not participate in the InFoPeople project:

- Are you presently connected to the Internet? What is your present situation?
- What do you know about the InFoPeople project? Why did you not apply?
- What should be next steps in the provision of Internet access, for you and for InFoPeople?

The study team presents the responses received to these research questions in the Snapshots of Libraries Who Did Not Participate in the InFoPeople Projects sub-section on page 60 below.

The study team also devised the following research questions to direct to the InFoPeople and relevant State Library staff about InFoPeople's operations and services:

- What roles did key staff members play in the InFoPeople project?
- What were the InFoPeople projects' strengths?
- What were the InFoPeople projects' weaknesses?
- What next steps should InFoPeople take?

The study team presents the responses received to these research questions in the InfoPeople Operations and Services Examined section, page 65, and State Library's View InFoPeople Activities, page 67, sub-sections below.

Site Selection

The first step was to develop site selection criteria. The study team consulted the InFoPeople Project Coordinator for her advice on appropriate sites to visit. Selection criteria included:

- Sites should have been active in the project and enthusiastic about the results;
- Sites should be selected from each of the Library of California regions in order to ensure geographic balance;
- Sites should have facilities adequate to the interviewing process and be used to hosting activities related to the project where possible;
- Sites should include different types of libraries: single location and multi-branch; urban, suburban, and rural; and city and county; and,
- Several sites should be selected that are ones that InFoPeople uses regularly for training because this is such an important component of the project.

The InFoPeople Project Coordinator then suggested specific sites and obtained their agreement to participate in the site visit evaluations.

Discussions during the onsite visits suggested the need to better understand the situation of those libraries who did not participate in the InFoPeople project. The evaluation team asked the InFoPeople Director to recommend five sites that had not participated in the InFoPeople project. The procedure the Project Coordinator used was to use the *California State Library Directory* <http://www.library.ca.gov/html/main.cfm> to divide the state's public libraries in terms of InFoPeople participation and Internet access into the following five groups:

- All sites/branches that are InFoPeople participants;
- Selected branches that are InFoPeople sites, and for some reason the central administrative library has never applied for the other sites;
- Selected branches are InFoPeople sites, and the central administrative library has applied for more at least once, but has not been awarded grants -- or at least not enough to cover all branches;
- The library has never applied for an InFoPeople grant, but has used local resources or other grants to implement Internet connectivity; and,
- The library has never applied for an InFoPeople grant, and they do not have Internet access - or at least not graphical access to the Web - based on the InFoPeople Project Coordinator's knowledge.

The libraries chosen all fell into the last group. In addition, the InFoPeople Project Coordinator did not know the library directors at the libraries chosen.

Document Collection and Analysis

The study team began by identifying and reviewing all available documentation about the State Library, InFoPeople, and the local libraries visited or telephoned. Particularly helpful were the libraries' web pages when available (for available URLs for these libraries see Appendix 2-2 Brief Profiles of Libraries Visited, page 92). Next, the study team requested certain information from the site visit libraries be sent prior to the visit. The study team specifically requested:

- Basic orientation materials and statistical information about the library;
- Planning documents related to past, present, or future provision of public access Internet services;
- Budget information (especially any cost items specifically related to the project);
- Brochures related to the InfoPeople project; promotional information or news clippings about the project; and,
- Samples of evaluative data collected such as surveys, user logs, or sign-up sheets.

See Appendix 2-3 Letter Scheduling Onsite Visits on page 100 for further details.

The study team requested a range of information about the InFoPeople Project from InFoPeople Staff and from the State Library project liaison the Library Development Services Bureau, Technology Coordinator). The information received was adequate to the task. The study team was unable to examine some relevant materials, however, due to the time constraints of State Library personnel.

Interviews

The study team sent a letter (see Appendix 2-3 on page 100) to each library visited. The letter proposed a date for the site visit, designated a project liaison (to coordinate logistics and check facts), suggested a tentative schedule which identified the type of people the team would like to meet and the likely questions, and requested that specific information be sent to the study team. The study team followed this up with a phone call to each site and subsequent e-mail exchanges as necessary.

The evaluators prepared interview protocols and a draft final report prior to the interviews, enhancing data collection and analysis quality by pre-structuring. The study team visited each site and collected data using individual and group interviews as well as focus groups. The evaluators collected additional documentation and conducted follow up telephone calls or exchanged e-mail as needed. The study team interviewed 105 people during their visits. For a complete schedule of interviews see Appendix 2-1.

The study team conducted 12 interviews and focus groups with selected InFoPeople and State Library personnel while in California using pre-structured interview protocols. The evaluators conducted follow up telephone calls and exchanged e-mail as needed.

One member of the study team conducted telephone interviews generally lasting a half hour with library directors from five California public libraries who did not participate in the InFoPeople project.

Analysis

The evaluators examined the results of data collection activities and prepared a draft report for internal discussion. The study team consulted project liaisons at each site to check the basic factual findings for accuracy. The evaluators revised the draft report and submitted it in draft form to the InFoPeople Project Manager and to the State Library, Library Development Services Bureau, Technology Coordinator. Next, the study team conducted a conference call in May 1999 with the InFoPeople Project Manager and the State Library, Library Development Services Bureau, Technology Coordinator to review the draft report. The evaluators submitted this final report the end of May 1999.

Efforts to Ensure Data Quality

Field evaluation is an art requiring quick assessment of opportunities and dangers to data quality on site. As Schatzman & Strauss (1973, p. vii) note:

> ...much of the research process consists of dealing with a flow of substantive discoveries and with field contingencies that variously modify the research; therefore the researcher is constantly attentive to options which are circumstantially presented to him, or which are created by him. Thus the field researcher is depicted as a *strategist*; for without linear-specific design - the researcher must develop procedure as he goes.

But field research is also a science, involving the systematic effort to reduce error due to researcher bias, incomplete or inaccurate data, and a host of other causes.

The Evaluators took a number of steps to reduce the threats to data quality in the present evaluation, both during data collection and later during analysis (as suggested by Guba & Lincoln, 1981; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 1990; and Schatzman & Strauss, 1973) including:

- Pre-structured research questions and interview instruments, pre-planned fieldwork, and where possible pre-planned final report.
- Chose standard, well-regarded methods familiar to the evaluators and appropriate to the setting (McClure, 1994; McClure, et al., 1994, Ryan & McClure, 1997; McClure & Bertot, 1997; and McClure & Bertot, 1998). Primary methods were qualitative (Miles & Huberman, 1994) including the use of documentary evidence, interviews (Spadley, 1979), focus groups (Kruger, 1988 and Morgan, 1988) and preparation of case studies (Stake, 1994 and Yin, 1994).
- Documented fully research design decisions in writing and in discussions among the study team.
- Sought dis-confirming and outsider evidence and points of view actively. Attempted, within the constraints of the visit, to interview stakeholders from multiple-perspectives.
- Responded flexibly to the new and unexpected opportunities the data offered.
- Documented fully the data collected. Where possible, the onsite evaluators tape recorded interviews while maintaining confidentiality. Evaluators conducted follow-up interviews where necessary.
- Triangulated the data collected and used mixed methods. Data collected from one source was cross-checked with another. The evaluators compared data collected using one method with answers obtained via another method. The evaluators shared drafts of factual portions of the final report with a key liaison at each site to check for accuracy.
- Pre-structured data analysis and reporting as suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994). This approach was possible because most of the data collection was pre-structured and the intended shape of the final report was known.
- Checked the quality of the data by tracking the chain of evidence that the study team gathered to be sure it was firm enough to support statements made.

Each of these efforts and others increased the validity and reliability of the evaluation findings and provide a firm basis for making recommendations.

FINDINGS

Findings from the late February, early March site visits and telephone interviews presented here cover the following areas:

- Principal benefits of the InFoPeople project;
- Utility of the community plan requirement;
- Utility of the community partner requirement;
- Key impacts on library users and communities;
- Key impacts on library operations and services;
- Impact of InFoPeople's *Librarians' Index to the Internet*;
- Future high impact information technology applications for public libraries;
- Impact of InFoPeople training activities;
- Snapshots of libraries who did not participate in the InFoPeople projects;
- Next steps for leveling the public library information technology playing field;
- InFoPeople operations and services examined; and, the
- State Library view of InFoPeople activities

Each section reports findings around key themes. Each section ends with potential next steps for InFoPeople and the State Library.

Principal Benefits of the InFoPeople Project

The study team asked those interviewed to identify the principal benefits of the InFoPeople grant. The benefits identified include the following:

- Provided public access to the Internet throughout California;
- Reduced the digital divide in California;
- Improved information literacy;
- Returned the library to the center of local community services;
- Altered and improved library collections and services;
- Fostered the development of electronic commerce locally;
- Leveraged new and enhanced partnerships and funding;
- Increased pride in local communities;
- Fostered local creation of local information; and,
- Enhanced the State Library's reputation among local public libraries.

The InFoPeople web site <http://www.infopeople.org/Proj/ipimpact.html> describes the ways that the project helps libraries known to InFoPeople.

Provided Public Access to the Internet throughout California

Beginning in December 1994, the InFoPeople project rapidly equipped, connected, and trained librarians at 530 of the 1162 public libraries throughout California as illustrated in Figure 2-1. This is approximately 46% of the public library outlets in the state.

Figure 2-1 California Libraries Connected by Cycle

Date	Cycle	Libraries Connected	Total Connected
1995/96	1	180	180
1996/97	2	153	333
1997/98	3	92	425
1998/99	4	115	530

Public libraries were often the first local public institutions to provide public access to the Internet in California's communities. Today public libraries report one million users of their public access Internet service annually (from the 1998 InFoPeople Quarterly Statistics reports). Librarians at each site visited repeatedly remarked, "If it had not been for the State Library we would not have Internet access today."

Reduced of the Digital Divide in California

The project significantly reduced potential inequity of access to the Internet throughout the state whether due to racial or ethnic background, disability, geography, or language. A surprise use of the Internet service for some librarians has been its use by immigrants to keep in touch with family, friends, and news back home (in other countries). One librarian told of a father who could no longer travel being able to see his daughter's art work for the first time because it was being shown on a virtual art gallery that the father could access at the local public library. InFoPeople surveys indicate that about half of those who use the Internet in the library have no other opportunity for Internet access. The InFoPeople sponsored service at the public library is still sometimes the only public access Internet service in the community. Librarians and users at every site visited continue without prompting to strongly voice support for eliminating digital divides in the community and the state. The issue remains a central concern.

Improved Information Literacy

Public libraries have historically played important roles in equipping people and local organizations to independently obtain, use, and create information. Libraries continue this function as information migrates from paper to computer to the Internet as a result of the InFoPeople project. The InFoPeople grants enabled local public libraries to provide community members with the basic information literacy skills necessary to obtain employment, conduct business, and improve quality of life in the new digital age.

These benefits were not limited to individuals however. InFoPeople public libraries were often the first local agency to have an Internet connection. Those interviewed related numerous examples of librarians training and advising local government officials, small businesses, and community agencies. In several communities, the library is perceived as the "Internet literacy and information technology training center in the community." One user commented: "People get to use and learn today's technology here [at the library]." These efforts, enabled by InFoPeople, increased individual, local government, non-profit, and business capacity to independently understand and make use of information and its associated technologies on the emerging digital superhighway.

Promoted the Library to the Center of Local Community Services

The InFoPeople initiative came in the wake of a series of voter and other actions at the beginning of the decade in California which significantly reduced funding to public libraries and caused communities, and even librarians, to question the relevance of public libraries. The study team heard a variation on the following quotes at each of the libraries visited:

- "We were going down the drain, we made ourselves relevant again thanks to the InFoPeople project."
- "In post-apocalypse libraries [this initiative] gave us confidence, inspiration, and gave us a boost."
- The public Internet access enabled by InFoPeople "tapped into something the community wanted." "The InFoPeople project showed us what future libraries could be like."

The InFoPeople project came at the right time for the libraries visited, it made them relevant to their communities again.

Several of the site visit libraries introduced and trained local government officials in the use of the Internet. Public libraries at the sites visited supplemented public school Internet activities, partnered with schools to provide services neither would have been able to alone, and in some cases introduced the Internet to the schools. All sites visited reported a range of new (to the library) users including non-readers, seniors, the technologically literate, and hard to reach groups like teens. One teenager remarked to the study team: "I have a great environment to hang out

in instead of the street." One librarian commented, "The library is now perceived as 'up-to-date' rather than 'old-fashioned' and librarians are the 'Information Navigators' in this new world." So now at the end of the decade, in several of the sites visited, "next to public safety, we [the library] are number one for local discretionary spending."

Altered and Improved Library Collections and Services

Internet access dramatically expanded the size of the collection available in a local library without an increase in cost. For example, the Internet service changed access to non-English language materials from next to nothing to immense with the flip of a switch. Immigrants, migrants, tourists, Californians with foreign relatives, and anyone interested in events beyond the horizon could suddenly keep up to date. Library users reported to the study team similar dramatic increases in access to collections in health information, employment, government services, and higher education, including the ability to successfully apply to college using the Internet.

In addition, InFoPeople initiated support for further development of the *Librarians' Index to the Internet* <http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/InternetIndex/>. This is an effort by California librarians to identify and organize Internet sources of information of interest to public library users. California librarians interviewed praised this source for its usefulness in answering patron questions.

The quality of traditional collections improved in several ways. Internet-based sources that review materials and library catalogs allowed libraries who could not previously access these collection development tools to make better selections. Internet-based booksellers made procurement faster.

The delivery of certain types of information services, such as the emerging Library of California initiative, only became possible with the Internet. For example, Plumas County Library could now subscribe to Infonautics' Electric Library that is only available on the Internet. The success of the public access Internet service directly contributed to the funding of related electronic services at public libraries, according to librarians at the sites visited. These related electronic services included: library automation systems and online public access catalogs, CD-ROM databases, local area networks, and even a computer lab.

Public libraries' ability to answer questions and to respond faster often improved. There was a dramatic (often 50% or more) reduction in referrals to other libraries for information services. For example, there has been a statewide decline in reference referral statistics reported by the 15 California Library Systems reference centers. The availability of Internet-based online catalogs also improved the precision with which librarians could refer users to remote sources. In the case of interlibrary loan, e-mail sped the processing of requests. As a result of Internet access, some questions that could not previously be answered by local public libraries became routine. For example, local officials at one library visited by the study team told of their local government's need to know the names and addresses of the top golf course designers in the country. Local librarians, searching on the Internet, found the answer and in a timely fashion.

Public service librarians are no longer primarily question answerers. More than half of a reference librarian's time may be spent in individual or small group training and advising sessions. The community increasingly views librarians as educators and trainers in how to use the Internet effectively. One California public library re-named its reference department to the reference and training department in recognition of this new role. Technical service librarians do less acquisition and cataloging of books and magazines (much of the processes involved are outsourced). Instead, technical service librarians spend much more of their time planning, procuring, installing, and maintaining information technology. These new roles exist due to community demand for a new type of public library where traditional and digital information collections and services coexist. The InFoPeople project made it possible for libraries and librarians to begin to define and assume these new roles, effectively expand their libraries' collections, and address the demand for new services.

Fostered Local Creation of Local Information for Worldwide Use

Libraries traditionally provide information created elsewhere to local communities. The InFoPeople project has made it possible for participating libraries to also be creators of information, particularly local information about the library, its services, and its community. InFoPeople has provided a model for this new role with its own web page <http://www.infopeople.org/>. Most of the participating InFoPeople public libraries have created their own web pages providing varying access to library services and the local community (see <http://www.infopeople.org/ liblist.html>). Thirteen public libraries currently use InFoPeople's technical assistance and server to create and maintain their libraries' home page. All of the libraries visited had their own web pages (See Appendix 2-2 Brief Profiles of Libraries Visited, page 92 for URL addresses). In some cases, the local public library was responsible for the creation of the city's web page as well.

Libraries now provide information about their community to the rest of the world, and the rest of the world knows about California in a new way due to this small investment by the State Library.

Fostered the Development of Electronic Commerce Locally

Electronic commerce is becoming increasingly important. But who will train the community, be they individuals, business, organizations, or government, to participate in this new electronic arena? Many of the public library participants in the InFoPeople project engage in this training and advising role for their communities. Several librarians remarked that businesses "come to us for advice and training to learn about the Internet and e-commerce and e-information." Employees come to the library now to learn "what they were afraid to show they didn't know at work." At the library according to one user, "People get to use and learn today's technology." In a quiet, largely unheralded way, public libraries that participated in the InFoPeople project offer the neutral place in the community to "kick the tires" of this new technology and obtain advice in its effective use.

Leveraged New and Enhanced Partnerships and Funding

Local libraries visited leveraged the small investment made by InFoPeople to produce ten or more times the initial small amount in additional new funds. In one case, an Internet workstation funded by InFoPeople convinced another state agency to fund a $200,000+ computer lab at a local public library. Partners mentioned by site visit libraries include: local branches of State Departments of Education, Elections, Health, Employment, Small Business, Taxation, Tourism, Economic Development, Human Resources, Transportation, Air Quality, Literacy, and Head Start. The significance of these partnerships with other units of government needs to be highlighted. These governmental units recognized that the public library Internet service could be used to electronically extend the reach of these agencies into every community of the state. Another outlet exists in California communities for citizen-government exchange of information and service.

There was clear evidence at the sites visited of the diffusion of Internet use to other local public and non-profit organizations due to the InFoPeople project. The public library, as a result of the InFoPeople grant, was the first public agency to have an Internet connection. The library introduced the Internet to these other agencies and trained their staff in use of the Internet.

There were a number of new partnerships with the business community as well. The librarians interviewed mentioned: Internet service providers including PacBell and local cable companies, small businesses, computer vendors, and computer stores. The business community, at least at the sites visited, is beginning to recognize the library as strategically significant for their interests. The library is the place in the community to come and get educated and trained about the latest information technologies. The library is a neutral place where future consumers can try out the latest information technologies for free before subsequent purchase. The library is one of the few places in the community offering re-skilling and basic re-employment assistance. At every site visited there were numerous stories of citizens who recovered their self-esteem, wrote their cover letters and resumes, identified job prospects, and obtained employment thanks to the local public library.

The majority of local government spending is pre-assigned. Discretionary funds must cover police, fire, harbor, parks and recreation, the library, and everyone else. Many of the libraries visited reported that they had received proportionally more of the discretionary funds available as a result of the introduction of the public library Internet service. Often the library introduced the Internet to local government officials and trained them in its use. Local government automation departments came to the library for advice. At the libraries visited, local governments have been swift to reward public libraries for their initiative.

Private individuals and groups played significant roles in establishing Internet services at the library, particularly at public libraries that did not participate in the InFoPeople project. Most common were one-time donations of workstations. Once public libraries established proof of the Internet service concept, local sources of funding saw the merit and gained confidence that libraries could deliver.

Increased Pride in Local Communities

The public access Internet service enabled by the InFoPeople project opened a window to the world for local California communities. Yet at each site visited, users of this public access Internet service regularly voiced how it made them proud of their local communities. For some, the comparison with other places in the world left them happy that they were where they were. For others, the Internet service brought enough of the world's riches to their doorsteps that it reduced the need to roam. For many, their view was summarized by this library users' comment, "The library's Internet service makes me proud to live in such a future looking city."

Enhanced the State Library's Reputation among Local Public Libraries

The success of this project has created a reservoir of credibility and good will toward InFoPeople and the State Library. Librarians at the sites visited repeatedly mentioned that they took actions primarily because of InFoPeople's endorsement. For example, the computer equipment standard announced for the latest cycle of InFoPeople grants is widely used by public libraries in procurement even when the public libraries use their own (or other granting agencies') money. Several librarians interviewed commented that they will attend new training workshops not sure why the topic is relevant to them but sure that the topic will become essential to them in the near future because InFoPeople thinks the material matters. Future activities of the State Library and InFoPeople will carry more weight due the success of the InFoPeople grant project.

Summarizing, the InFoPeople project grants were textbook examples of the successful application of seed money to local settings. Each grant generated substantial additional local funding at all of the public libraries visited.

Next Steps for InFoPeople and the State Library

Many of the California public libraries visited are much improved when compared to their weakened financial state when the decade began. The introduction of the State Library funded public access Internet service played a significant role in the turn around for the libraries visited. The InFoPeople project brought substantial new benefit to California's local communities, its libraries, the State Library and the state as a whole at very modest cost. These benefits may be transitory, however, if action is not taken to sustain California public libraries' newly established beachhead in the emerging community digital information landscape. The evaluators present the following suggestions clustered by key stakeholders.

California Citizens

Californians have been introduced to the notion that the library is a different place, a place to learn and try out the new information technologies like the Internet. The State Library should consider a statewide mass media campaign to reinforce the public libraries new role in this area. Librarians at several of the sites visited specifically mentioned the need for this type of state level promotion of the newly re-defined California public library.

California Legislature and the Governor's Staff

Delivering new services to new clients while continuing to meet old commitments can be the political ticket to new opportunity and new funds. But the message has to be communicated to the key decisionmakers and funders. Significant are the disenfranchised groups reached by the public library Internet service: the poor, immigrants, minorities, inner city, rural, disabled, teens, seniors, a who's who of groups governments like to say they serve. Significant is the notion of the public library as a portal for government-citizen interaction, exchange, dissemination, and service provision. Public libraries are in the communities that matter, with the technology and trained staff to help. Public libraries with Internet access can demonstrate their successful contribution re-skilling their community members for new jobs and re-educating their citizens for new roles in the emerging digital environment. The study team believes the successes generated by the InFoPeople project are worthy of attention by the legislature and Governor's staff. The State Library should acquaint the appropriate state bodies with the program's successful effort.

California State Agencies

Each of the libraries visited developed partnerships with local units of state agencies based on the new library Internet service. Public libraries throughout the state need to know of the range of beneficial partnerships which libraries are already participating in with state agencies. How is the partnership set up, what is required, what are the benefits for the library? Could InFoPeople collect this information from public libraries and disseminate it via its web page?

The State Library is in a unique position to proactively seek out and broker these partnership opportunities for public libraries, negotiating state agency to state agency, to the benefit of everyone. A specific unit of the State Library should be designated to pursue these opportunities.

California Information Technology Industry

A few businesses have already grasped the value of having an ally in the community who educates consumers to the importance of a product and provides a neutral location where new products can be tried and experienced at minimal cost. This message needs to be communicated to the high technology community in California, according to some of the libraries interviewed. At present, communication of this message is hit or miss. Few have thought out the guidelines necessary for industry and libraries to firm up this obvious alliance. But if California public libraries want to remain *the* place in the community which provides an introduction to effective use of new information technologies, they can not do so without free or affordable technologies (and associated training for their staff) flowing to public libraries as they are introduced by industry. The payoff for industry and libraries is immense, the State Library is the obvious deal maker.

California Public Librarians

The librarians interviewed know that their libraries' general situation is much improved when compared to the beginning of the decade. The improvement is due in part to the State Library and InfoPeople, but also due to public librarians' own labor. The State Library is in a unique position to acknowledge and thank California public librarians for their work. But what is also needed from the State Library are vision statements delivered in professional forums which:

- Distill this decade's experience;
- Define the newly emerged public library;
- Unambiguously lay out the impacts for all stakeholders; and,
- Indicate how the State Library intends to support libraries and librarians in their new roles.

For example, if the newly emerging California public library is to be *the* community center for the introduction and use of new information technologies, then certain prerequisites must be met. These prerequisites include continuous staff training, budgeting for such training, and routine dissemination of newly acquired training throughout the organization.

In the argot of marketing and advertising, InFoPeople, due to its successful implementation of public access Internet services in California public libraries, is "branded." That is, public librarians trust InFoPeople's word on effective use of information technology in their communities. This is a strategic asset for the State Library, hard won and requiring judicious use with the state's librarians. California has public Internet access thanks to the InFoPeople project. Now, the State Library needs to focus its attention on cementing an image of the re-defined public library in key stakeholders minds, securing the resources necessary to sustain the image, and establishing the new partnerships which will make the promise of the Internet service a reality.

Utility of the Community Plan Requirement

The study team examined the impact of the InFoPeople grant requirement that a participating library develop an approved community plan. The InFoPeople web site <http://www.infopeople.org/Proj/ commplan.html> describes the community plan component:

> A community plan is a written document which sets forth the details of how a given InFoPeople Project site will provide public Internet access. The development of a community plan is a condition for receiving an InFoPeople grant award. Direct community involvement in development of the plan is strongly encouraged. An approved plan must be on file at the State Library before a site can initiate public Internet access. The community plan includes detailed information about: community partnerships to promote Internet use; specific Internet services available at the site; usage policies; equipment and connectivity; training for public and staff; public relations; local evaluation of the Project. The original 180 InFoPeople sites (Cycle 1) were given a "suggested outline" for the plan, whereas the 153 expansion sites (Cycle 2 [and subsequent cycles]) which received grant awards in 1996 were given an actual community plan form <http://www.infopeople.org/CP/cpform.html>.

The web site also makes available community plans from Cycle 2 and 3 libraries. Some of the plans submitted were several pages, some book length. The principal impacts on the public libraries visited from the community plan requirement were: public libraries engaged in some pre-planning prior to implementation, and the community had a formalized role in the project that included participation and buy-in.

Project Planning and Management

The general feeling of the librarians interviewed is summarized in this comment, "the plan was a good idea, it organized for us what we needed to think about, what was involved, what we had to do, and the policies we needed." Individual comments about the plan beyond this general agreement varied based on the library and librarians' familiarity with this aspect of project management and their capacity to engage in planning. Many of the libraries visited viewed the requirement for a written plan prior to implementation of the public access Internet service as novel, exceptional, and external to existing library practice. A few libraries viewed the requirement as a request for documentation of already in place, routine, internal practice.

Most librarians interviewed did not appear to have done a project plan like this before, both the need and the benefits were new to them. So for some, the community plan "was a lot to do, particularly out in the community, for a $5,000 award..." Some felt the plan requirements "...were too complex and demanded too much." Others were initially lost, "there were no instructions for what to do" [probably a Cycle 1 library]. "We didn't know whether we were supposed to be following what the others did" [referring to the community plans posted on the InFoPeople web site]. For others "it enabled us to ask better questions, particularly in the technical area" and "helped establish a process for developing public access Internet services at target branches." All were glad that there was no follow up by InFoPeople to see if the plans had been achieved, none had done their own follow up evaluation.

A potentially important byproduct of the InfoPeople project was to introduce or provoke basic project planning in a significant number of California libraries.

Community Involvement and Role

The strong encouragement within the community plan to canvass the community for interest, resources, and needs seemed to be the most challenging to the librarians interviewed. For many, the requirement "gave us an entrée into the community. It was a crutch we could use to explain to ourselves and the community why we were out there talking to them and asking for their help." Most seemed surprised at the resulting community involvement. Some were more successful than others in productively directing the community's efforts that resulted. In one case, the library identified a community Internet Service Provider willing to provide Internet access to the library for free. For another library, it "...started the process of learning how to communicate to the public about the Internet."

Several libraries indicated that there was a spillover from community assistance with the Internet project to community assistance with other library programs.

A potentially significant byproduct of the InfoPeople project was to introduce or provoke systematic planning for community involvement at a number of California libraries.

Next Steps for InFoPeople and the State Library

Most of the libraries visited found this type of community planning a novel, exceptional, and externally imposed activity. Public libraries need help to plan better. There is a need for library administrative teams to gain a deeper understanding of why they are doing what they are doing when they plan services, make decisions on the information technology infrastructure to support these services, and involve the community as supporters and users. There is a need for wider dissemination of library planning tactics and strategies that work. Summarizing, there is a need to build in the local capacity for public libraries in California to routinely plan for new (or revitalized) library services, the information technology to support them, and the community involvement to sustain any program introduced. The study team offers the following suggestions:

- Focus attention on three distinct but interrelated planning areas: services, information technology, and community involvement.
- A model for planning library services is Himmel and Wilson (1998).
- A model for library information technology planning is Mayo and Nelson (1999). For further discussion see page 43.
- Models do help: Libraries used the model community plans on the InFoPeople web site. Formatted planning aids or a workbook, standards, and other written guidance could be useful in other State Library initiatives. Small initiatives, like a small prize and publication on the State Library web, to identify and reward the best written plans in all areas of library service development might be a modest endorsement and stimulus.
- The InFoPeople approval process and one-on-one phone consultation did help librarians better grasp this activity.
- Focused hands-on training in how to plan would help: An InFoPeople-type workshop around planning for a specific new or revitalized service, keyed perhaps to targeted State Library funding, would help. Areas that the study team uncovered include:
  - A poor understanding of what project planning can (and cannot) do for the library.
  - A poor understanding of what key external players (like the State Library) can (and cannot) do for a public library.
  - Inability to inventory project needs over the life-cycle of the service.
  - A lack of training in the discovery of community resources, the matching of identified community resources to inventoried project needs, the acquisition of these community resources, and their effective use.
- Clearer written explanations of goals (and hopes) for a planning requirement in a grant may help inexperienced librarians better understand the reasons for planning of this type. For example, anything that can be done to create the context that planning ought to be a routine internal practice rather than an external imposition would be helpful.

InFoPeople successfully broke new ground in this important area. The project provided many public libraries in the state with exposure to what must be considered core managerial processes. There are lessons learned by InFoPeople staff members that might be transferred to other units within the State Library. Most libraries (at least among those visited), on their own, discovered some utility in the planning and community involvement exercise. But most libraries, if the libraries sampled prove the rule, need more help in understanding how planning contributes to successful provision of service and access to better planning techniques and strategies.

Utility of the Community Partner Requirement

The study team examined the impact of the InFoPeople grant requirement that a participating library designate a community partner. The InFoPeople web site <http://www.infopeople.org/Proj/commpart.html> describes the community partner component:

> Every InFoPeople library is required to have a designated "community partner." The community partner is someone from the local community who has agreed to work with the library staff in providing Internet access to the public. The community partner makes a long-term commitment to the library, and it is one that represents a considerable investment of personal time. Each community partner must attend up to five day-long required workshops and must be involved in the development of the community plan. In addition, community partners have helped the existing InFoPeople libraries in a wide variety of ways. Participating local libraries should clearly define the role that the community partner will play in the public Internet access program.

Community partners at the libraries visited were, as one librarian remarked, "experts who really knew things at the beginning, but then they faded away."

Community partners played important initial roles in the establishment of the public access Internet service, often doing things which the library staff could not do, but then, typically after no more than a year, they faded from view. Librarians' comments suggest that the idea had merit but may have been poorly executed. Specifically, librarians needed more guidance on potential community partner roles, how to implement the program from recruitment through sustaining partner involvement, and on InFoPeople expectations.

Roles Played by Community Partners

Community partners at the libraries visited played a number of useful roles during the initial phase of the Internet service including:

- Installed and repaired hardware often better and faster than the city and county automation departments upon which the libraries relied.
- Chose and installed software.
- Created library web sites.
- Trained community members and volunteers in groups and one-on-one. In the case of the volunteers, the training could be extensive and volunteer attrition high. But the resulting volunteers, were dedicated and useful to the library. One library "had a tremendous response from the community" beginning with 48 trainees. But at the end of each session the number reduced by half. The library ended up with six "excellent, dedicated" volunteers.
- Created subject bibliographies and became subject specialists.
- Aided some libraries in the creation and establishment of rules and policies related to the Internet service.
- Advertised the service to the community.
- Gave the staff confidence and challenged their ignorance.

InFoPeople staff identified additional community partner roles on their web site <http://www.infopeople.org/Proj/commpart.html>. Community Partners often trained and then became computer/Internet docents[1] and volunteers.

[1] The term docent used in this report comes from usage at the libraries visited by the study team. It refers to community members who volunteer part time to do such activities as train users to use the Internet, maintain computers, printers and copies, and other related activities.

Why Community Partners Participated

The Community Partners the study team talked to identified the following motivations for their participation in the project:

- Some saw participation as a civic duty;
- For others it was something to do in retirement;
- Others said this volunteer opportunity made use of their work experience now that they were retired;
- For some, it was fun and most of the people were nice;
- Some Community Partners just wanted access to computers and the Internet;
- Some used this volunteer experience to force themselves to learn more about computers; and,
- Some wanted to get involved in something that was exciting.

Some Community Partners worked as if it was a full time job. For several, including one Community Partner interviewed, the experience was a stepping stone to a full time job in a new field. The Community Partners interviewed thought that their project experience was positive for them, the library, and the community. Most were involved, or were eager to get involved, in other library projects.

Community Partners Recruitment and Characteristics

Some libraries found it difficult to recruit their community partners. On the other hand one librarian commented, "It was the easiest volunteer recruit I ever did." Another librarian recruited a local PC users group "who did more than we ever could have done." Several of the non-participating libraries interviewed noted the difficulty of convincing working people to attend the required training sessions without compensation. All of the Community Partners interviewed during the site visits were retired or not employed. InFoPeople's mid-1997 *Policies and Use Survey* <http://www.infopeople.org/Survey/eleven.html> included data on community partners and volunteers at participating public libraries.

Community Partner - Library Relations

Many librarians interviewed agreed the "concept was good" but it was an "artificial situation," "lacking in structure" in which "community members knew more than the librarians" and "community members were directing the use of library resources" e.g., the purchase of computer software and accessories. "We were not sure what Community Partners should do." Some librarians thought "it would have been better to initiate the project and then let partnerships with the community evolve." Several librarians mentioned that their Community Partners were from a "different culture," a "computer culture," which could sometimes be "arrogant," "possessive," and "territorial." One librarian went so far as to say, "I would have preferred that a library staff person be allowed to take the required training rather than the Community Partner." In general, the interview context did not permit the study team to comfortably ask the Community Partners about many of the issues raised by librarians.

InFoPeople may not have anticipated the difficulty some librarians had in defining a community partner role, recruiting a partner, and developing a positive and productive working relationship. The requirement, written guidance, and workshop presentation were not enough to successfully sustain this effort. The study team believes the idea is sound and should be considered again in future programs. But the role of community partners will need better structuring to succeed and librarians may need training to better address their concerns.

Next Steps for InFoPeople and the State Library

When the InFoPeople project started, the Community Partner program made sense. Often the necessary technical knowledge (and resources in some cases) resided in the community rather than within the library and its staff. Times have changed. Today, librarians possess in-house more of the expertise, better understand Internet service requirements, and have pre-established roles for the community to play. A library docent program trained and coordinated by a librarian (or qualified library staff person) may make more sense than the externally trained community member asked to fill a vaguely defined role. InFoPeople should refine community partner role and commitment descriptions and revisit the need for external training (and its length, location, and day of the week offered). Community involvement remains essential, however InFoPeople and participating libraries can better specify, and thus make better use of, the roles community partners play.

One promising area for InFoPeople and the State Library to develop is the Internet docents program. Internet docents provide point-of-use and small group instruction on Internet usage. Every public library can probably use this group. There is an opportunity for InFoPeople to develop training and instructional materials for use by these docents and for use by the library staff that train, manage, and sustain this group of volunteers.

The State Library faces a more generic issue. A principal focus of the State Library is on supporting new programs that generate new library users and new volunteers as well. There are generic issues, tactics, strategies, and structures that improve volunteer participation in library services. This knowledge could be compiled into a manual for use by any State Library program that uses volunteers. The manual should be directed toward the library staff member that will coordinate volunteer activity. By taking the generic approach, the State Library will not have to re-invent the wheel each time a new program or service is offered that uses volunteers.

The site visit interviews suggest some areas InFoPeople and the State Library might address to better to manage, integrate, and sustain new volunteer activities including:

- Determining when volunteers are appropriate in the provision of new library services and for which services they are appropriate;
- Identifying tasks which volunteers might do;
- Creating volunteer assignments which account for diverse interests and abilities;
- Developing personnel procedures necessary for a volunteer program;
- Recruiting and training issues, e.g., aiming for volunteer quality or quantity;
- Managing experts, being comfortable when you don't know everything; and,
- Fostering positive staff/volunteer relations: managing the cultures.

Workshops and workbooks (as two examples) developed for library coordinators of Internet docent programs might form the basis for more generic materials at the State Library level.

There is a second issue for InFoPeople and the State Library: How to provide guidance, encouragement, and training to enable librarians to better relate to peers from newly emerging information professions. Put in this context, the Community Partner requirement was a partially successful first effort to address a difficult, national, professional issue. Observations from the study team site visits include:

- Some Community Partners knew a great deal more about the Internet than their librarian counterparts (particularly at project's start). Some librarians were uncomfortable in this situation and reacted too defensively. Community experts judged that they were unwelcome and left. This matters today for at least three reasons. These community experts need to be (re-) involved with libraries. Working in mixed-professional teams is the norm – turf battles reduce productivity. Unlike in the past, perhaps, librarians must be comfortable in situations in which they do not know it all and around people who know more than they, even in areas perceived to be librarians' professional domain. Focusing on this issue in InFoPeople workshops may be appropriate

- Traditional cues to expertise are often mid-leading, e.g., children lead, dress doesn't matter, paid/unpaid/volunteer/unemployed irrelevant.
- Librarians that do recognize the problem would benefit from specific contextual guidance for how to effectively deal with situations in which they are overmatched, including objectives, strategies, tactics, scripts, and explanations. Obvious cases include the reference interview, addressing local computer/Internet user groups, contacting local computer stores and Internet Service Providers (ISP), dealing with external automation/systems units, and recruiting/training Internet service volunteers.

Some librarians will need to learn to share their experience, training, and abilities with fellow experts. The InFoPeople project experience suggests that librarians will need more detailed, specific help to learn when each strategy is appropriate when introducing new services.

Key Impacts of the Internet Service on Library Users and Communities

In this sub-section, the study team reports on:

- Who are the users of the Internet service at the libraries visited;
- What are the types of service these users want;
- What is a typical user's experience accessing the Internet at the libraries visited;
- What areas of interest do Internet service users have at the libraries visited;
- Users who help other users: Library Internet docents; and,
- What users want, at least among those interviewed at the sites visited.

The sub-section concludes with some suggested next steps for InFoPeople and the State Library

Who are the Users of the New Internet Service at the Libraries Visited?

The study team heard essentially the same report at each of the sites visited (and even at the sites not funded by the InFoPeople project) regarding the users of the new Internet service, users:

- Generated significant new traffic at the library. Managing the number of users and volume of use became important;
- Were often new users or users returning to the library after many years away;
- Were often non-traditional users, including non-readers;
- Were varied in their knowledge of and capacity to use the Internet, from neophytes to "techies" (those with information technology knowledge); and,
- Were, as a result, changing traditional library relationships with other local institutions and groups.

The types of users varied during a typical day: seniors, home school students, and unemployed during the day; pre-teens and teenagers after school; and adults, especially families led by children, in the evenings. The summers added tourists and college students trying to keep current with their e-mail accounts.

All libraries reported daily observations of users for whom the library was the only source in the community for Internet access. Those libraries with computer labs added telecommuters, local small business people, and training groups from local government, community organizations, and industry.

The relationships generated by the Internet service with local community groups -- some old, some new -- were significant. In some communities, the local schools, traditional library partners, did not have Internet connections and the library introduced the Internet to students, teachers, and school administration. A range of community organizations, including local branches of state agencies and local government, worked out various partnerships for service with the local libraries visited. As one librarian put it, "For once, libraries had something new to offer." One example of a productive new relationship was a computer lab funded to serve telecommuters. These new users of library facilities can rent a phone, mailbox, send and receive faxes, make copies, and rent space, in addition to using a computer and the Internet and other library services.

What Are the Types of Internet Services Users Want?

The study team classified library Internet service users observed or interviewed at participating sites by type of service desired and the implications for library service provision that result. Types of library users include those seeking:

- Only the net, thank you: The libraries visited already have regular users who use the library only to access the Internet. To some of these users the rest of the library is a distraction. Some librarians interviewed wonder whether these users belong in libraries. Other librarians thought these users

represented the future for libraries. One important sub-class are tourists (and college students on summer break) using the library to check their e-mail.

- Basic access: The library is the only public access point to the Internet in many of the communities visited.
- Basic training: Some library users view the library as the place in the community to receive basic introduction to the Internet and to basic sources on the Internet in popular subject areas. An issue is whether libraries want to assume this role for other information technologies. A second concern is whether the community will no longer need to use the library as their familiarity with the Internet reaches a certain threshold.
- Advanced information seekers: Some library users have complex Internet search requests and need help from trained Internet searchers. Some issues include:
  - Will local librarians be expert in all of the subject domains needed;
  - Will librarians (or others) organize the Internet so as to make search strategies and techniques standard;
  - Will libraries develop efficient ways to refer local requests to outside library experts; and,
  - Will the library have anything to offer these users from their desktop?
- An introduction to the latest information technology: Some library users came to the library because the Internet was new. They wished to be introduced to the technology, to receive help in purchasing their own equipment, and help in setting the equipment up. An issue is, will the library wish to be the community champion for new information technologies as they become available? Current technologies of interest at the libraries visited include: scanners, fax machines, color printers, digital cameras, and small (home or small business based) LANS. An issue is who will pay for the technology, supply staff training, and, in some cases, provide the needed space. There may be a natural partnership here between the library and local and national vendors of information technology.
- To create products and services on the Internet: Some users look to the library to be the community server hosting a range of local, community produced, information sources and services. One example present at several libraries are library produced and/or hosted local government web pages. Users may include individuals seeking to express themselves in a new way. Users sending e-mail or participating in chat groups may be early examples of this segment of library Internet users. Users may also be commercial or non-profit groups. All of the libraries visited were interested in training in web page creation and management. Users need training and space to experiment too.
- Virtual learning: Some users, notably home school students and independent scholars, along with teachers look to the library to provide access to courseware (e.g., WebCT) and other opportunities for the community to teach and learn on the Internet.
- Access to electronic commerce: One library visited had an active group of Internet based investors. Library users may routinely want to place an order or track it with a commercial firm on the Internet. Should libraries become digital retail outlets for manufactured products and services? Will manufactures underwrite some of the libraries' costs? How should the library support users who want to start their own Internet-based businesses?

The above list is by no means exhaustive. But the list begins to illustrate the range of uses of the public libraries' Internet service already being made and the opportunities for additional library services opening up. Already, libraries may need to pick and choose among the types of uses supported. InFoPeople can increase the range of services offered by setting up cooperative public library efforts to address key uses made by the public. For example, InFoPeople could organize one public library group to focus on developing an e-commerce service that all libraries could use. Already, early adopter libraries the study team visited are making choices and looking to InFoPeople for direction.

What is the Typical User Experience?

The study team assembled this composite picture based on library user statements confirmed by observation of the Internet service in use. A typical user had to come in to the library and sign up for a half-hour or hour time slot on a form to use the Internet service a day or more in advance. Time slots were limited with available workstations at 95% capacity (according to perceptions of librarians interviewed). Workstations were available whenever the library was open and always in use. Some machines sat idle for weeks in need of repair, according to reports from users and librarians interviewed and observations by the study team. Sometimes there were waits of three or more hours for the few free machines and at least one librarian reported witnessing a fist-fight among users seeking workstation access.

Once the user arrived at the workstation the experience could be frustrating. One user summarized, "they [the workstations] crash, they die, they lockup, it can be hard to navigate on the net, and then your time is up." The workstation space is often public, noisy, and distraction filled. Help was available from librarians or volunteers, which most took advantage of, particularly for one-on-one introductions and basic training. But, as one teenager put it, "we try not to ask them [librarians] hard questions because they don't always know the answers." All users found many of the basics, such as use of the web browsers, to be intuitive and were surprised by the ease of use.

The evaluators intentionally do not offer suggestions to InFoPeople to reduce the frequently frustrating experience library Internet users have due to lack of equipment, poor maintenance, poorly designed software for public access, etc. Some things can be done or considered around the margins, such as training librarians or designates (be they staff or volunteers) in basic computer repair, State Library supported volume computer equipment buying, etc. But the study team believes solutions to this problem lie at the local level or with software producers, not at the State Library level.

What Areas of Interest Do Internet Service Users Have at the Libraries Visited?

The typical users' areas of interest when using the Internet service at the site visited included:

- Employment, including identification of job prospects, various "how to" issues, and applying (one state agency required the application to be sent via the Internet);
- Re-skilling (becoming computer literate itself a valued skill);
- Self improvement (e.g., learning Hebrew);
- Health information;
- Genealogy;
- Consumer information (e.g., seeking used car prices) and purchasing (e.g., use of Priceline);
- Government services and legal research;
- Investment (both those seeking to invest and traders);
- Homework (including an expanded range of topics like animal acupuncture);
- Anything but homework (beenie babies, sports, gymnastics, games, fan activities);
- Home schooling;
- Recipes;
- Trip planning; and,
- Real estate.

Memorable stories included:

- A person who found a long lost loved one using the Internet.
- The Swedish family that decided to visit a California town due to its web page. Then when the family arrived they used the library to send e-mail back home to relatives and accessed web pages to keep up with local Swedish news back home.
- The college student who was able to submit her Spanish exam to a remote college from her home town using her local library.

- The high school summer help hired by the city and trained to use the Internet at the library who then used the Internet to look up colleges, apply to them, and look for on and off campus housing. Subsequently these students were admitted to college and believe the library made it possible.
- Migrants in a local program trained to use the Internet at the local library. Later these same migrants came in to use the Internet to learn of news from their foreign country home.
- Eastern European and Asian immigrants using the Internet to find materials in their native languages.
- The family that planned their vacation using the Internet, including buying plane tickets, making hotel reservations, renting cars, etc.
- The newspaper reporter/telecommuter who used a library computer lab as a virtual office complete with Internet connection, rented phone, fax, space, etc.
- The numerous reports of successful job searches conducted at the library using the Internet and computer support.

Using the Internet could be frustrating but this frustration did not reduce demand. Most of the use was to learn what this new information technology could do or to seek information which broadened opportunities and horizons. Primarily, users sought information rather than engaging in two-way communication. Often this was due to library policy (i.e., no e-mail, no chat) or the limited number of public workstations. The study team did not uncover any instance in which community members created and presented their own information on web pages with library support (e.g., training in software use or provision of server access). Although the library's web page was often created by a community volunteer.

Users Who Help Other Users: Library Internet Docents

Some users also volunteered as docents to help library users use the Internet. Libraries depend on volunteers to provide service, and the new Internet service is no exception. Community partners often played an early role in identifying and organizing volunteers to assist Internet service users. All reported high initial interest with reduction by half after each training session. Those volunteers that remained were highly regarded and seem to continue to volunteer at the library. Today these volunteers are integrated with the existing library volunteer programs at most of the libraries visited. Volunteers conduct one-on-one basic Internet training and subject-specific training where expertise exists. Other volunteers maintain equipment, including adding paper to the printers and copy machines, etc. Systematic volunteer training and reward programs exist to some degree at all libraries visited. Statewide support for these volunteer efforts is a possible growth area for InFoPeople.

What Users' Want, at Least at the Sites Visited?

All of the library Internet service users praised the service and the library. All expressed the need for more and better equipment and connections. Demand has not been saturated. Several users requested other types of equipment: fax machines, scanners, laptops, palm pilots, and digital cameras (which could be loaned out). All hoped for access to e-mail (where it wasn't available) and additional software (including word processing, databases, and spreadsheets). There was a great deal of interest in user training, both in subject specific areas as well as updates and introductions to the latest technology. Often, users expressed the willingness to help but were not certain how they could.

Not every community member was happy about the opening of this digital window on the world. Some users worried that this signaled the end of the libraries' paper-based resources and services. Each of the libraries had concerned community members (and in some cases non-community members) seeking filtering of Internet content for themselves, their children, or in the name of the entire community. Other community members sought greater privacy when interacting with the Internet, deeming the experience nobody's business but their own. All libraries visited have Internet public use policies. The majority of the librarians interviewed had not had major challenges to their public access policies. These librarians were thankful for the InFoPeople requirement that a policy be in place and for training on this topic, "It raised some questions and got us thinking." The librarians interviewed felt that drafting an Internet policy with local board involvement was a necessary and constructive process.

Those librarians who had major challenges to their library's Internet policy were uniformly dissatisfied with InFoPeople training and the State Library's "failure to live up to professional rhetoric." Librarians who were challenged noted that these challenges were not unanticipated. Yet when challenges occurred, no one (including the State Library) offered adequate paid legal advice, financial assistance, or enough visible public support. These librarians felt isolated and forgotten by their profession and the State Library.

Next Steps for InFoPeople and the State Library

User demand is overwhelming for the new public access Internet service provided by their local libraries with critical InFoPeople support. As a result, public libraries have not taken the time to systematically plan for future Internet services for the libraries' new users. InFoPeople can assist public libraries in several ways:

- Fund efforts to identify who the users of the Internet service are and how they might be served better;
- Assist public libraries to prioritize the resulting service options and to eliminate services that are no longer needed;
- Encourage public libraries to plan for the new Internet service options now;
- Assist in the establishment and effective use library Internet docent programs; and,
- Lead efforts to cooperatively develop resources and services of use to public libraries throughout the state.

Without attention to these areas now the library will lose its new users as technology changes, users become more adept in independent use, or home use becomes more common.

Identify New Users and New Service Needs

Public libraries need to ask who are their new, non-traditional, and non-reading users due to the Internet service. What services can the library offer them? All of the libraries visited were well aware that there were new users. But few systematically assessed who these users were and what these users wanted from the library. The State Library and InFoPeople can encourage public libraries to systematically identify their new users and the types of services needed in a variety of ways. One way might be to offer a competitive grant to fund a new service to the new users resulting from the introduction of the Internet. A requirement for the grant might be to require proof of a systematic assessment of who the new library users are and their service needs.

Prioritize New Services and Eliminate Unnecessary Old Services

The study team offers some initial impressions of types of service and common areas of interest observed at the sites visited. Libraries will have to prioritize the services they will offer and consider what prior services should be dropped. Few public libraries visited had criteria for dropping services or had applied the criteria to existing services. On incentive might be to add a requirement to competitive grants offered to fund a new service to the new users resulting from the introduction of the Internet. Require that the public library applicant indicate which services will be dropped with amount of budget saved, criteria used, and evidence gathered.

Encourage Public Libraries to Plan for New Internet Services Now

The libraries visited, faced with high demand for service, tended to believe that the need for the Internet service presently provided would never end. But it is likely that Internet users' needs will change, and the library needs to be prepared to change with users' needs. For example, the number of U.S. homes with personal computers has surpassed the halfway mark (San Jose Mercury News Online 04/11/99). What provisions are public libraries making to serve home-based Internet users? Is delivery of library services to the home a priority? What role, if any, should the State Library play in encouraging public libraries to develop services to the home? What State Library – local library partnerships might be beneficial in this global environment? Will the State Library compete against public libraries in the provision of home Internet library services like licensed databases?

Should a competitive grant be offered to fund a new service to the new users resulting from the introduction of the Internet, add yet another requirement. The grant application must show evidence of a systematic plan for the new service, for information technology needed, and for community involvement.

Establish Effective Public Library Internet Docent Programs

Public library Internet docents and coordinators of these helpful groups are ripe for targeted InFoPeople training. InFoPeople could develop standardized training manuals, policies, procedures, and activities (web page, listserv?) for docent coordinators. InFoPeople or the State Library could organize the cooperative creation of basic and advanced training packages using the web, videos, and other media for use by docents and the librarians training them. Perhaps other State Library incentives would be helpful, like awards for the best Internet docent program, etc.

Cooperatively Develop Web-based Resources to Address Common New User Needs

Common resource and service needs should emerge when public libraries begin to systematically identify and describe new public library users, begin to prioritize new service offerings, and begin to plan for the service, the information technology, and community involvement. The State Library and InFoPeople should initially take the lead in organizing cooperative development of web-based resources and services that will meet common needs across California public libraries.

One approach extends the *Librarians' Index to the Internet* model in several new directions. Interactive learning environments might be created to respond to common topics of interest. Elements of an interactive learning environment that expand on or distinguish it from the *Librarians' Index* model include:

- Broader topics: One area of likely development would be in common public library operations problems (discussed below). For example, an interactive learning environment on Internet public access policymaking might be created.
- Links to structured learning communities: Answers to traditional reference questions (e.g., How do I write a resume?) provide sources (e.g., here is a book on the topic). But traditional answers do not link the user to learning communities (via face-to-face, e-mail, chat, or video-conference): to fellow resume writers and those who can interactively help them, or more broadly, to fellow job seekers and those who help them (e.g., resume writers, counselors, or job providers).
- Process relationships: Answers to traditional reference questions (e.g., how do I write a resume) do not identify the question as a step (looking for a job in the classifieds, selecting jobs for which I qualify, writing a cover letter, etc.) in a larger process (seeking employment) and supply links to learning communities and resources that apply.
- Interactivity: Users both receive and send information, there is a give and take, not necessarily in real time but closer to it. The cooperation and collaboration is not limited to the compilers of the resource.

Interactive learning environments blend existing and imagined technologies in exciting new ways.

Creating this new information technology will take experimentation that can be encouraged by InFoPeople and the State Library today. Creating this resource may also take brokering and dealmaking. For example, in the case of an employment learning environment, the State Library or InFoPeople might need to bring together and organize members of the associated learning community (e.g., state and local government agencies, etc.). In a learning environment a user at one moment is a creator the next. Traditional library users will need to learn how to create in a digital environment in addition to how to use. Public libraries need to train users in the creation of their own listservs, chat rooms, courseware, web pages, etc. and then provide the local capacity to serve these mechanisms to the larger Internet community. Learning communities require nurturing to sustain them. Some of the nurturing "rules" are known, but many are yet to be discovered. InFoPeople and the State Library can contribute should they choose.

One first step to consider is funding pilot projects which take a known local community of interest at a public library, trains them to use courseware such as WebCT, provides the necessary server capacity, and looks at resource allocations, impacts, and consequences. By the time the project results are in and understood, courseware might have evolved to something that supports non-academic learning and home servers may be more common.

Key Impacts on Library Operations and Services

The study team asked those interviewed to identify the principal impacts on the internal operations of the library due to the InFoPeople grant. The section includes the administrative, public service, and technical service impacts identified along with next steps for InFoPeople and the State Library.

Impacts on Public Library Administration

On its face, the InFoPeople project simply put a PC with an Internet connection in the reference department of some California public libraries. This action, in conjunction with a number of previous[1] and co-temporaneous[2] activities in the public library seems to have crystallized and brought to the public library doorstep a vision of a new public library. This new public library adds a significant digital component to the existing paper-based services. Public libraries, as a result, have entered a period in which every significant decision is being re-examined in light of this new vision. The process is laborious and messy, particularly when it is without a road map. The commitment to completing the journey is in place for many of the California public libraries visited but library managers will need continued help. The study team's findings cluster in the following areas: planning, training, facilities management, budget and finance, policy, library branches, community relations, strategic partnerships, and evaluation.

Planning

The InfoPeople project directed the participating library manager's attention to planning for new service delivery, for information technology support and for community involvement. The more recent e-rate grants continued the experience for public libraries. These first experiences left all of the library managers interviewed, no matter size, geography, or community wealth, convinced of the planning process' importance and convinced that they need help to plan more effectively. Specifically, these external funding requirements demonstrated the necessity of planning, identified personnel who should be members of the library planning team, introduced the basic elements that should be present in any plan, and provided an initial exposure to the planning process to the libraries visited.

The study team's findings regarding InFoPeople's Community Plan requirement appear earlier in this report on page 18. Findings regarding information technology planning appears in the Impact on Technical Services section below on page 39. InFoPeople has the opportunity to further embed the notion that planning is a basic requirement of successful library administration and to increase the basic skill level with which librarians plan.

Training

The evaluators discuss ways InFoPeople and the State Library can offer better training geared to library administrators more fully in a separate section devoted to training below, see page 49. But two observations seem striking.

Change Focus and Delivery

Library administrators need and want training targeted to their needs related to the digital services impacting libraries and, in particular, their administrative impacts. The existing training efforts made by

[1] Examples are: introduction of computers, circulation systems, and OPACS.
[2] Examples are: cd-rom databases, e-rate, Gates Foundation grants.

InFoPeople and the State Library are well regarded and well received. But InFoPeople training needs to expand its focus:

- From librarians in general to also include specific sub-groups like library directors, planning teams, or policymaking teams;
- From software and sources to library administrative operations; and,
- From raising consciousness on important issues to pragmatic implementation.

Issues seem better understood than solutions and the administrative mechanisms used to arrive at them. This may be due to the success of existing training offered. Pragmatic training of teams of relevant local administrators to address important problems seems in order.

These sessions should be "hands on" in the InFoPeople tradition, and led where possible by library administrators who have addressed the problem under consideration. The structure of the session might be guided exercises that examine the utility of applying relevant administrative processes and techniques to address the problem. The promised outcome should be an outline of a plan of action to be used when the team of administrators returns home. As a supplement, many of the administrators interviewed felt that small group seminars that mixed administrators with relevant experience with those who are struggling might be more appealing than lecture based workshops.

Build Organizational Capacity to Sustain Continuous Training

Most libraries visited had not added the organizational capacity to sustain the continuous ongoing training needed by staff to meet the demand for library digital services. Library administrators interviewed appeared to recognize the need for staff training and that the need is not likely to go away. But administrators had not altered library policies, procedures, incentive structures, and budgeting practices. Several libraries had training committees, but the study team did not examine their work.

Facilities Management

Every library visited had concerns regarding the impact of the digital component (to include the Internet service) of the new public library on existing facilities, including the following:

- Space requirements: The introduction of workstations to the library added to space needed without freeing space. Many of the smaller libraries visited do not have additional space. Are there ways to better manage existing space in these facilities?
- Location: Where to put existing workstations and how to anticipate future growth is in flux.
- Information technology requirements: Bringing power and connections to the new workstations has meant major costly retrofitting efforts by many public libraries.
- Impact of computer labs: All of the libraries visited have interest in computer labs. What are the facilities requirements? How can space be retrofitted efficiently?
- New technologies: What impacts will the next generation of information technologies have on public libraries? Lead time would help library administrators plan for these new technologies better.

The changes needed in public library facilities as the result of the new Internet service were significant. The InFoPeople project experience taught participating libraries to anticipate some of these changes and to seek assistance from InFoPeople.

Budget and Finance

The InFoPeople project influenced participating libraries' budgeting far beyond the several thousand dollar addition to the public libraries' funds, including:

- Springboard effect: Additional library funders became willing to finance other information technology projects at all of the libraries visited once the Internet service was established. Only a few of the more successful libraries visited did active prospecting for funding, more should but don't know how.

- Fee for service: Most of the libraries visited were the first in the community to have Internet connections or to offer Internet access to the public. Since that time librarians have acquired a range of skills valued by local government, non-profit agencies, and the private sector. Yet few libraries have explored and put in place the financial mechanisms to allow charging fees for training and other services. This mechanism would allow the library to underwrite other areas of its information technology component that need support. Public libraries will find it more difficult to pay for required technology and sustain a community leadership role in this area without such fee for service mechanisms.
- Hidden costs: Non-profit budget planning with its uncertain and one time sources of income requires immense skill. All sites visited expressed the need to understand the resource implications of the introduction of new technologies better. All libraries discovered the many hidden costs associated with the Internet service introduction. Not only do the areas of hidden cost need to be identified in advance better, but reasonable methods of calculating these costs need to be devised.
- Education of boards and city officials: Financial analysts from local funders (like county and city governments) asked to participate at several locations visited by the study team. All expressed the need for more information on budgeting for this new area of library services. What were reasonable costs, reserve and replacement funds, future requirements, etc.? These officials were interested and willing to be influenced by a credible external source like InFoPeople or the State Library.
- Grant writing: Some libraries still find grant writing a challenge and a burden. For example, several libraries mentioned that they found the e-rate grant procedure difficult and requested further assistance.

Public librarians are thinking realistically about substantive financial issues, looking to improve their efficiency, and seeking training to manage this area better. InFoPeople should provide incentives for key local funding officials to participate in selected training activities.

Policy

Public library administrators face a range of policy issues, both public and internal, as a result of the introduction of the public Internet service. On the public use side, libraries developed policies and procedures to address:

- Censorship/Filtering/First Amendment/User privacy issues;
- Equitable access and traffic management associated with use of the workstations;
- Network security and workstation tampering; and,
- Definition and limits to service, e.g., should downloading, software use, e-mail, and chat rooms be available?

Local development and control of these policies mattered to the librarians interviewed, although peer, state, and national models influenced policy development. Often library policymakers obtained these model policies via InFoPeople's website <http://www.infopeople.org/Proj/policies/>. Several librarians interviewed raised the issue of standardizing these policies across libraries but suggested no action. All noted the immense amount of time involved to develop policy in these areas. None felt that any of these policies were now fixed.

There was favorable reaction to workshops or seminars on key policy areas targeted to the key local policy making team and emphasizing pragmatic training in improving the policy process over issues and consciousness raising. InFoPeople succeeded in beginning the discussion at local libraries and among key community decision makers about Internet policy issues. Libraries now have developed their position on at least some of the public issues in writing. It is time to introduce library directors to the processes and resources available to defend their

libraries' positions. Library directors at the sites visited need a clear, realistic and pragmatic understanding of the challenge process, stakeholder roles and the limits to their aid, and local strategies, tactics, actions, limits, and consequences. To repeat, the emphasis here should not be on values or issues but on the pragmatic defense of values now that the library knows what they are.

An InFoPeople workshop at the library director level might be useful. Clear communication is hampered even in such a targeted setting because any public or written text (like a workshop manual or subsequent web-based posting of presentations) produced today becomes the ammunition of your adversary tomorrow. The study team believes the risk is worth the benefit. Key players, in particular those who are perceived to be key supporters of libraries in the challenge process, should be invited to clearly detail the support they offer, the mechanism to engage it, and to indicate the support they don't or can't offer. Input from those who have undergone the challenge process as to workshop content might be useful.

Internal policy development, if anything, required greater attention. A new service was offered and required new policies, procedures, job descriptions etc. But the introduction of this service, along with other information technology introductions, forced the nearly wholesale re-thinking of the public library policy structure. Issue areas include:

- Roles and authority of the public service unit;
- Roles and authority of the technical service and automation (if different) units;
- Roles and authority of the computer lab where it exists;
- Roles and authority over outsourced functions, such as local government automation units providing library computer services;
- Provision of traditional, non-digital services, including: what level of service should be offered with what rationale and what services should be dropped or added;
- Integration and normalization of policies across media, including: paper, cd-rom, Internet, and other multi-media;
- Staff development and training; and,
- Web page development.

The libraries visited were curious about how other libraries addressed these issue areas and sought an exchange of information, advice, and model policies. A similar (set of) workshop(s) on selected internal operations policies, again at the director and policy team level, would be a useful start.

Library Branches

In addition to the InFoPeople training, some library branches may need specialized training for a range of IT planning and other topics -- according to the branch librarians and central library administrators interviewed. The librarians interviewed noted that many branch libraries were written off in the triage caused by the large loss of library funding in the early 1990s and are only now beginning to recover. Some branches are only open part time (a day or two a week). Some branches are staffed by paraprofessionals. Every system with library branches struggles to get branch staff trained and Internet services installed, according to the librarians interviewed. Branch staff must find temporary replacements in order to attend training sessions. This apparently represents a high barrier for both branch librarians and central administration. Branch librarians suggested that the State Library pay for the hiring of substitutes in addition to the cost of training.

Library system managers may be hesitating to fund branch library Internet access due to uncertainty over external funding opportunities. Should the library system commit to funding something that some external funder is about to provide? The State Library contributes to this confusion to some degree.

Should the State Library decide to focus attention on the branch libraries, here are two suggestions. The introduction of the Internet could be one element in an effort to revitalize decaying library branches. InFoPeople has given grants to a number of branch libraries. InFoPeople might look at the more successful introductions for alternative requirements and incentives. A second direction might be to use revitalized branches as pilot sites in

experimental, State Library funded projects. The intent would be to experiment small, focus attention on a neglected library unit, and point out that innovation does not always have to start at the main library – there can be trickle up.

Community Relations and Strategic Partnerships

All of the libraries felt that community support of the library, and in particular for its Internet services, was very high as a result of the InFoPeople project. For once, one librarian remarked, "we were the leader of the pack" and another commented "we had something to show at budget and inter-agency meetings." Some assessed the library as the most popular of the non-safety, discretionary, units of government. The public began a re-assessment of its image of public libraries as a result of the InFoPeople project. Was the library "old-fashioned" or "cool?" Were all the library books going to be replaced by computers? Would pornography greet children as they sat down to use the Internet service? Areas of potential interest for InFoPeople include:

- Craft the image of the new public library and librarian and actively disseminate using mass media. The image of the new public library and the new librarian is evolving. But the image being crafted is not by librarians. What do public librarians want fixed in the public's mind? What can be done across the state to craft the desired image? The State Library has to take the lead in identifying the new "infopeople" and "infoplace" for the mass media.
- Update State Library mass media infrastructure: How can public libraries get their message out on controversial issues? Does the Internet only contain porn? Will all books vanish from libraries and readers be unwelcome? What expectations should the public have for what is available, and how, at a public access Internet workstation? Can the State Library afford to allow expectations to just evolve on matters of importance to libraries? Should the State Library take an active role in shaping public opinion? The State Library needs the capacity to rapidly mount and sustain responsive and effective media campaigns on issues that matter to libraries in this new digital era.
- Encourage a local library presence in local media coverage of the Internet: The study team searched in vain while on its site visits for a newspaper article or television or radio program by a librarian about the Internet. A mention of the library and the Internet would have been enough. There were dozens of articles and programs on the Internet. Where were the real local experts offering advice and knowledge? Can the State Library or InFoPeople offer a package of incentives to increase local librarians' creation of material suitable for local media use?
- Build local library capacity to contribute to local media: Is the problem time, lack of production facilities, endorsement by the State Library that it matters, or lack of training? The study team was struck by librarians' absence in the media on this hot topic since they clearly have something to tell their local communities.

Both local public libraries and the State Library may be missing key opportunities by not having the capacity to produce newspaper, magazine, cable/tv, web, and other media pieces. The use of these media outlets could better position libraries as knowledgeable community resources for new information technologies, introduce new programs, and enable quicker response to emerging issues and opportunities.

Share Partnership Opportunities across the State

The public libraries visited had been somewhat inventive in partnering with local agencies and organizations to maximize the impact of the public Internet service. But surprisingly, each library had partnered with different organizations than the others. Is this because the opportunity was local? Or is this because there is no mechanism for public libraries to share their partnering experiences, alerting their fellows to the opportunities for all public libraries? Some libraries do not have the capacity or training to prospect for beneficial partnerships and could use this type of training. But all would benefit from the models and experience of their sister public libraries throughout the state.

This is a unique time for many of the public libraries visited. Interest in them is hot after being written off a decade ago. But unless libraries build in the capacity to identify opportunities, respond, indeed, lead where possible, this brief window of opportunity will close. Strategic partnerships and a crafted public image matter. Public libraries need assistance in building this capacity.

Evaluation

The public libraries visited had little to say about their evaluation of the public Internet service introduced as a result of the InFoPeople project. Indeed the only consistent data on the service collected at the sites visited was the service sign up sheets, but even these were not analyzed. One librarian confessed, as heads nodded in the group of area librarians present, "I don't collect too many statistics, I even estimate the numbers I send in for InFoPeople's Quarterly Statistics reports." One respondent captured the basic view, "We haven't evaluated the service because we haven't had to justify it, the demand is too overwhelming."

The team did learn that two of the libraries visited had recently constituted committees to consider ways of collecting evaluative data on their Internet services. Indeed most librarians interviewed stated as one did to the study team, " I know we need this but I don't know what we need." Further, there was concern about having enough staff to collect the data and all wanted software to collect the data automatically. Data mentioned by those interviewed as potentially of use include:

- User profiles, without invading privacy, to include age, profession, ethnic/racial background;
- Head counts to confirm increase in traffic without necessary increase in circulation or at other measured service points;
- Number of users by resource accessed, including: OPAC, specific cd-rom database, specific Internet source or [subject] category of source;
- Internet use by function to include: e-mail, chat, and search engines;
- Computer software use by product and, where possible, by activity (e.g., word processor used to prepare cover letter, resume, complete an application...); and,
- Time (or other indicator) on task data for reference staff to measure perceived shift from question answering to one-on-one training, group training, instructional design and material preparation, traffic management (as discussed below), equipment maintenance, and other tasks.

There was interest in, indeed demand for, software to collect any data to be externally required. There was interest in software to interpret the data collected.

Summarizing, on the managerial side, public librarians are steering without a compass because they think that such a navigation aid doesn't exist. On the political side, satisfied with the first infusion of new funds in years, public librarians see no need to justify a popular service. These librarians may not have made the connection between their lack of data and their lack of technology, lack of staff, lack of space, and lack of funds.

The State Library needs to take the lead in organizing the effort to determine what local and State Library statistics are needed related to network resources and services. The State Library also needs to take the lead in collecting the relevant data and assisting public libraries in interpreting and using the data to improve services. The State Library also has an opportunity to influence what data is collected nationally on public library networked resources and services. For further recent work in this area see the authors' website <http://www.albany.edu/~imlsstat/>.

Impacts on Public Services

The InFoPeople project initiated changes to the operation of the reference function in public libraries as far reaching as the changes caused by the introduction of computerized circulation systems to the circulation function. The impacts noted in the study team's site visits include a shift from:

- A limited paper based reference collection to an expanding, mixed digital-paper base;

- Question answering to user training but accompanied by other annoying distractions;
- Optional staff training to mandatory, continuous training just to keep up;
- An emphasis on public access alone to support of staff serving the public using such tools as reference desk workstations;
- A paper based reference collection to trying to provide integrated access to collections in a variety of media (including paper, cd-rom, Internet, video, etc.); and,
- Book literate to Internet savvy users.

Responding to these impacts and the challenges and opportunities that result will require the sustained effort of local libraries, InFoPeople, and the State Library.

Collections: From Paper to Digital, from Limited to Expanding

Reference librarians interviewed no longer solely buy paper-based sources. Today's reference collections contain a mix of paper and digital reference sources. One librarian illustrates the trend, "Even four years ago adult reference expenditures were 95% in paper, today 57% of expenditures are digital."

In general, collection expenditures at the libraries visited were not cut by use of the Internet. Rather, the collection expanded due to the introduction of the Internet without additional cost to the collection budget. That said, many public service librarians interviewed readily gave examples of specific sources not renewed or not renewed as frequently. Others noted reference products that were no longer in print or were only available on the Internet. Several librarians mentioned that government sources, which they could not previously afford to purchase, were now freely available on the Internet.

All libraries reported significant reductions in reference referrals from smaller libraries to larger affiliate libraries. Librarians in small libraries reported that users now find adequate answers to their questions using the Internet locally. This may well translate to reduced costs at the system level and statewide. Interlibrary loan requests were easier to verify and filled faster due to the Internet.

Several librarians noted the ability to look up reviews, examine other library catalogs, and order materials, all on the Internet. This enabled better selection and faster acquisition of materials particularly in small libraries. It was unclear how widespread this practice is and whether written aids on Internet selection and acquisition for public libraries exist for California public librarians' use.

The public service librarians interviewed accepted the role that digital collections can play at their libraries. Public libraries should consider further re-deployment of resources committed to paper collections toward providing digital access and local digital information production capacity via library web servers. The emphasis should shift to making the promise of the Internet a reality via the construction of digital finding aids which organize the Internet (as much as possible/desirable) and integrate existing local library collections across media. InFoPeople's *Librarians' Index to the Internet* is a fine model for cooperative efforts to organize Internet resources. What has InFoPeople learned that it can share? Can competitive grants be offered, with requirements derived from InFoPeople's experience, to stimulate further, sustainable, librarian cooperative ventures in this area? Two potential areas are: cooperative web-based reference tool or learning environment development to respond to frequently asked questions (e.g., selecting, purchasing, installing, using a workstation) and to common user groups (e.g., genealogists). A third promising area is local development of reference tools providing access to local information (including facts and statistics, directories, biographies, indexes to local publications, etc.).

From Question Answering to User Training Accompanied by Annoying Distractions

Once, reference librarians measured and defined reference service by the ability to accurately answer questions asked by library users at the reference desk. This definition is no longer complete. A significant and growing portion of reference service involves training users in point-of-need, one-on-one, use of the Internet.

Indeed, one California public library recently changed the name of its reference unit to the reference and training department. Specific training includes how to use the Internet, how to navigate the Internet including use of search engines, and how to locate sources on certain topics.

Librarians claimed to do less training in small groups or large groups than one-on-one. Reasons given for avoiding group training included: they were uncomfortable in speaking to large groups, did not have the appropriate equipment, a lack of space, or librarians did not feel confident of their mastery of the subject. On the other hand, each of the libraries visited had conducted a number of group orientations to the Internet or introductions to specific subjects on the Internet. Training groups of Internet docents were also common. Despite the public service unit's significant change in focus and the expanding role that user training has, a number of the public service librarians felt as this one respondent commented, "we fall down in our training of the public."

Build Needed Training Infrastructure

Not all of the libraries visited have built the infrastructure support capacity to accommodate the switch from question answering to training. For example,

- Instructional designers were not on staff or on call;
- Material preparation and the multi-media equipment necessary to prepare instructional materials was limited;
- Equipment necessary to offer multimedia training to the user was not available in the reference areas of the libraries visited;
- Training of the trainers in development of multi-media instructional materials was unavailable;
- Local incentives and a reward structure for training or preparation of training materials was lacking; and,
- User training areas or facilities often unavailable or unsuitable.

Librarians recognize that sustained user training, like staff training, has become essential to what librarians do and are. But they have not acted on this understanding.

Reduce Unnecessary Distractions

All public service librarians interviewed complained that a number of distractions limited their ability to answer questions or train the public. These include:

- Constant computer repair: Computer equipment needed regular attention, including: adding paper to printers and copy machines, re-booting frozen computers, re-formatting the screen to fit printer paper size, and minor disk recovery chores. There was little technical support for large or small problems at most libraries visited. The lack of technical support represents a significant barrier to further development of digital library services. Some of the libraries visited had partially addressed this issue by training library volunteers to do some of these tasks.
- Librarians as traffic cops: Librarians complained that they were becoming traffic cops, spending an inordinate amount of their time: scheduling computers, policing time, arbitrating Internet policy violations, and checking that the users were old enough or had permission to use the Internet.

These problems are more than merely a minor day-to-day annoyance. Each of these problems appeared at the sites visited by the study team, suggesting a common management problem uncommonly addressed.

One approach to reducing these public service distractions is to simply wait until management catches up with the innovative new Internet service. Another is to use these problems as a vehicle to create a public service management infrastructure. For example, offer an award for solving the complaints mentioned above (and others). But do not make the award until two conditions are met. First, a digital or paper publication appears which details the problem and the solution with convincing, evaluative data showing before and after improvements. Second, the entrant offers proof that one or more libraries outside of the local system adopted the solution.

The State Library or InFoPeople should consider establishing a web site to identify public service problems associated with the Internet introduction, seek solutions if they meet certain criteria (e.g., report provides convincing evidence), publish (via the web) the results, and acknowledge the contribution. Initially, financial or other inducements may be necessary to stimulate interest. Eventually, simple acknowledgment may be adequate. The goal is to establish a routine practice in public libraries: when you have a public service problem turn first to this single source to post the problem, discover the solution, disseminate a solution (if it meets appropriate criteria), and receive an acknowledgment. This type of approach could work in other public library management areas as well. Finding solutions to one library's problems at the next library visited was the norm during the study team's visit. Finding a mechanism to increase the dissemination of good ideas among the state's public libraries should be a priority. A structured web page on the Internet may offer part (but not all) of the solution. State Library awarded public library best practice awards, offered in other professions and industries, are not out of line if they deliver results.

Expanded Ability to Answer Questions

All of the above is not to imply that librarians stopped answering the public's questions. The perception among the public service librarians was that the availability of the Internet improves question answering. Librarians most commonly mention as a key improvement the expanded range of questions that can now be answered by the local library receiving the question. Many note improvements in quality, efficiency, speed, and currency. But to date, collecting evidence that supports these perceptions is unnecessary according to the librarians interviewed. The evidence is either all too obvious or simply not needed to justify the Internet service.

Online Reference Not Heavily Used Yet

One Internet service that has not taken off yet is online reference. This service allows remote users to ask and receive answers to questions they may have via the Internet. Those offering the service mentioned several reasons for the slow introduction including: lack of publicity, the need for personalized "high-touch" assistance, delay between a user asking the question and a librarian responding, and that the service is still "ahead of its time."

Staff Seeking Training to Keep Up

Training of reference staff, be they librarian, paraprofessional or volunteer docent, was a central concern to all librarians interviewed. As one librarian told the evaluators, "We live in fear that our users will know more than we do." Most librarians agreed with another librarian who said, "It's InFoPeople's job to keep us one step ahead of our users...and based on past experience they [InFoPeople] will." A subsequent section makes programmatic suggestions, see page 49.

Need for Reference Desk Computers

InFoPeople brought the first Internet workstations to most of the public libraries visited. The emphasis was rightly on public use and users responded, making an unused workstation a rarity at California public libraries. Reference librarians find it difficult to answer questions if the answer resides on the Internet because the Internet workstations are always in use. Those interviewed reported that local funders are reluctant to fund the obvious solution, an Internet workstation at the reference desk, because the workstation isn't for direct public use (where the apparent mandate lies). Funders apparently seek to avoid the public misperception that a reference desk workstation might cause, that librarians are serving themselves first before the public. InFoPeople, recognizing the need, began to distribute two workstations, one for staff use, beginning with Cycle 3. Earlier cycles received only one workstation. Even those receiving two workstations did not always put the staff workstation at the reference desk apparently.

Yet of the several libraries the study team visited that had reference desk workstations, all reported that they significantly served the public better as a result. At several of the sites visited, librarians independently suggested a competitive grant program awarding reference desk workstations. Only a few grants need be made.

The significance of the grant would be that InFoPeople and the State Library endorsed the concept that reference desk workstations matter. This endorsement would, in turn, nudge local funders to pay for the reference desk equipment locally.

Integrating the Library's Collections

Today's library contains books, magazines, the Internet (listservs, web pages, chat rooms, etc.), videos, cds, and more. Users and public service staff are finding it increasingly difficult to locate all relevant information the library has access to on any topic across all the media choices. The library does not have one finding aid to all of the collections to which the library has access. Maximizing investments in locally available collections requires a common interface that marshals the finding aids of disparate media. What can InFoPeople and the State Library do to speed solutions?

Would it be useful to make the individual entries of the *Librarians' Index to the Internet* OPAC ready? That is, prepare short MARC records for the Internet items in the *Librarians' Index* and provide an easy means of uploading these records into a local library's OPACS.

Computer Savvy Users

The ease of use of the Internet graphical user interfaces surprised reference librarians and users alike. User adoption and learning about the Internet is rapid and omnivorous. But each of the libraries visited had a story about a memorable user who knew exactly what he wanted, but had no clue how to get to it on the Internet, he only thought he did! Librarians also need to constantly address a common user misconception that "everything is there [on the Internet], and everything is free." There are a group of community members in each jurisdiction that view the public library as the place to obtain free training in various aspects of the Internet. The training offered at each public library is not standardized, it varies based on the local talent and ability of the reference (or computer lab) staff.

Many of the users of the library's Internet service are new to the library. Several of the libraries visited had results from user surveys. These surveys were designed to elicit support, gauge present use, and assess future computer/Internet service needs. A future area to explore is the range of services these new users would like the library to provide. A second related area to explore is how to obtain a profile of these new users as an aid to program development. What could be exciting about these new users is that they are non-traditional, hard-to-reach users. It would be a lost opportunity if their presence in the library could not be sustained. What is challenging about new users is their challenge to libraries to:

- Train and socialize these new users to the library setting with special attention to users who were alienated by library norms and practices in the past; and
- Re-examine existing norms and practices: are they necessary, offensive, or productive?

The introduction of the new public Internet service and its new users will determine the character of this facet of the emerging new public library. Assembling a package of strategies and tactics that public libraries can apply to this issue today, before these users go elsewhere (or stay home), is important. Already it may be too late for public libraries to retain the interest of the more sophisticated computer/Internet users in the community. Public libraries must keep up with implementing and using the latest information technology or lose many of these users.

Impacts on Technical Services

The technical services department[1] continues to be transformed by successive waves of information technology including the introduction of the Internet. Once, the principal function of technical service departments

[1] Technical service departments have various names (including automation and systems departments) and reside within the library, city or county governments, or elsewhere. For the sake of clarity, the study team uses technical

was book acquisition and cataloging. Now, outside vendors contract to complete many of these tasks. Now, many technical service departments perform the function that automation and systems units play in other public and private sector organizations. For some, the need for a systems unit is new. In many cases, the staff from these units are interested people "pulled from everywhere" who have learned much of what they know on the job. Sometimes the systems function is outsourced, in whole or in part, to local government automation departments. In these cases, the library manager of the technical service unit is the principal point of contact.

The introduction of Internet service had several significant impacts on the technical service units of the public libraries visited, including:

- Many libraries have only recently created a unit dedicated to information technology planning, selection, acquisition, and maintenance;
- There is increased demand for technical services due to the digitalization of public services. The increase was as dramatic as the introduction of the automated circulation function. Networked PCs rather than minicomputer/terminal hookups are now the norm;
- Procurement delays are severe, sometimes three to six months from purchase;
- Equipment repair delays are severe, with nine month delays in one library visited;
- Staff needs to learn a whole new set of software and hardware;
- New staff positions, such as web masters, are necessary;
- Refocused technical services from internal operations (circulation) to public services;
- Direct public use and PCs (rather than terminals) means looser control of computing resources. This means increased concern with network security and tampering; and,
- Further problems in coordination and authority among the various relevant units including: the library technical staff (where they exist), library administration, and automation units (where the function was outsourced).

These impacts created a range of problems, issues, and opportunities for the technical service units of the libraries visited.

The problems and issues facing the technical service units visited by the study team are similar to the concerns of any systems/technical support/automation unit in other public and private sector organizations. The public library technical services units visited face: shortages of qualified staff, need for training, service backlogs, demand for information technology planning, ambiguous roles and authority, and uncertain coordination between the technical unit and other units in the library. InFoPeople and the State Library may foster improvements in the following areas based on discussions with the librarians interviewed:

- Procurement delay reduction;
- Repair delay reduction;
- Information technology skill upgrades;
- Information technology management training and advice;
- Information technology planning assistance; and, where necessary,
- Direct information technology advice and assistance via information technology SWAT teams and circuit riders.

The following sub-sections describe these potential areas of further involvement in more detail.

Procurement Delay Reduction

Many of the libraries visited faced severe procurement delays. One library visited waited six months for PCs. The study team did not have time to investigate, in detail, the procurement situation at the libraries visited.

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service department throughout to mean those who manage the technical aspects of the library's information technology, specifically the Internet service.

However, based on the comments of those interviewed, the study team suspects that the State Library and InFoPeople could have a significant impact in this area should they choose to do so. The following illustrate the types of actions that could be taken:

- Investigate the problem: Begin by simply investigating the problem. Questions which occur to the study team include:
  - What are normal procurement delays? What is normal at public libraries;
  - What are average prices for current recommended systems;
  - What are the procurement bottlenecks and barriers commonly faced by public libraries;
  - What is the feasibility of a state procurement program for libraries;
  - What private companies are available and interested in California public library business? With what benefit to libraries?
  - What interest do public libraries have in cooperative buying programs, if any, and under what conditions?

  The results of such a study would be of interest to libraries even if no further State Library or InFoPeople actions were taken.
- Train library procurement agents: Few if any, of the librarians interviewed had procurement training. Introduction to the basics might yield significant benefits for libraries in less money spent, reduction in time delays, and improved quality. The knowledge acquired could also be transferred to local library users, both individuals and organizations, considering their own information technology purchases.
- Examine regional, system, or state level options: Are there actions taken at the regional, system, or state levels that could reduce barriers to successful public library procurement of information technology?

Procurement, along with the following area of repair, are the types of hidden, unforeseen problems upon which otherwise good information technology services founder.

Repair Delay Reduction

Many of the libraries visited faced severe delays in the repair of their information technology. One library visited waited nine months for repair of a PC. Many of the libraries visited had public Internet workstations idled due to lack of repair. The study team did not have time to investigate, in detail, the repair situation at the libraries visited. However, based on the comments of those interviewed, the study team suspects that the State Library and InFoPeople could have a significant impact in this area should they choose to do so. The following illustrate the types of actions that could be taken:

- Investigate the problem: Begin by simply investigating the problem. Questions which occur to the study team include:
  - What are normal repair delays? What is normal at public libraries;
  - What are average prices for common repairs;
  - What are the repair bottlenecks and barriers commonly faced by public libraries;
  - What is the feasibility of a state information technology repair program for libraries;
  - What private companies are available and interested in California public library repair business? With what benefit to libraries?
  - What interest do public libraries have in cooperative repair programs, if any, and under what conditions?

  The results of such a study would be of interest to libraries even if no further State Library or InFoPeople actions were taken.
- Train library repair technicians: Few, if any, of the libraries visited had trained repair technicians on staff. Even an introduction to the basics might yield significant benefits for libraries in less money spent, reduction in time delays, and improved quality. Many librarians interviewed expressed interest in this program.

- Examine regional system and state level options: Information technology repair is a problem at every organization today. Are there regional or state level options that would improve libraries' capacity to maintain their information technology?

Public libraries have experienced the potential benefits that the Internet offers. Intellectually, librarians understand that procurement and repair and other support infrastructure is different than that needed for book technology. Intellectually, they grasp that the need for action in these areas is past due. But at a pragmatic level, little meaningful action has been taken to begin to support Internet services. Public libraries need a nudge from InFoPeople and the State Library to begin to systematically address the problem.

Information Technology Skill Upgrades

On-the-job training and trial-and-error learning is the norm in library technical service departments. Many of the technical services staff come to the job from other backgrounds. Training needs include:

- Software training: Commonly used software in libraries with attention to the latest software (e.g., MS Office 97) and operating systems (e.g., Windows 98 or NT and its unanticipated impacts when upgraded). Mentioned was training for new staff or training in software new to the staff (e.g., UNIX), training the trainer workshops, introductions to new software that libraries ought to know about (e.g., web page development, software for statistics gathering and interpretation). Also mentioned, training about software fixes to common problems (e.g., bookmarking and timing out software).
- Web page development and management: Every library visited mentioned this training need. Existing web page development is lightly embedded in the libraries visited. Volunteers created the library web page at many of the sites visited. See additional comments on page 58.
- Latest technology: There is great interest in information technology that is applicable to libraries both large (e.g., LANS and network administration) and small (e.g., scanners and digital cameras).

Library technical service departments value training targeted to libraries rather than commercial enterprises. Fees for training are an option, particularly when combined with scholarships, subsidies, and rewards for good practice. Regularly repeated courses at different locations would help. Sequences of courses, perhaps leading to a certificate, might also be appropriate.

Information Technology Management

Consider Seminars in Addition to Workshops

Library administrators and technical service managers face a number of immediate problems and issues. The lecture or workshop format may not lend itself to discussing these concerns. Technical personnel at the sites visited enthusiastically endorsed a seminar approach facilitated by InFoPeople staff (a meeting of a group of peers to discuss a common problem) over the workshop approach (teacher and students) when addressing issues requiring discussion and sharing of experiences by library information technology managers. Seminars which favored the attendance of teams would be best (e.g., no additional fee if you bring a partner). A commonly mentioned issue was the provision of network security.

Use the Web to Aid Information Technology Management

The web might be used to cooperatively develop management aids that address common problems. For example, InFoPeople and the State Library might develop a cooperative, web-based, technical service personnel infrastructure which regularizes job descriptions and roles, describes associated skills, identifies quality training sources, and identifies available jobs and personnel. Elements of the personnel infrastructure could include:

- Model job descriptions for technical service positions that include brief descriptions of the skills necessary. An updated list of current quality training (including non-InFoPeople) available to obtain

the skills identified in the job descriptions. The price of an InFoPeople endorsement of non-InFoPeople training should include at minimum reduced rates for librarians and free training for InFoPeople staff.

- A resume bank and posted job section keyed to the job descriptions and skills.
- A web-based presentation of this information that links job description to skills required to opportunity for obtaining the skill, to available jobs, to potential applicants.
- Supporting forms and communication capability to register for training, to post jobs, and to apply for jobs.

The model for cooperative web development would be InFoPeople's *Librarians' Index to the Internet*. The resulting technical personnel infrastructure would have the effect of endorsing a set of norms, structures, skill requirements, and training paths. Similar web-based aids might be developed to address other shared information technology management problems.

Information Technology Planning

Many libraries gained their first experience with information technology planning recently due to external InFoPeople, e-rate, or other funder requirements. This initial experience left many of the library managers interviewed convinced of the planning process' importance and convinced that they need help to plan more effectively. The study team focused on two areas during the site visits:

- What are the current needs for information technology planning?
- What are the state-sponsored information technology planning services that could be developed and delivered state-wide, for example, via the web?

This is an opportune moment for InFoPeople to further embed information technology planning as a basic library function and to advance California public librarians' planning skills to the next level of sophistication and utility.

Current Information Technology Planning Needs

Library administrators and information technology managers interviewed mentioned they need help in the following areas:

- Understanding the information technology life-cycle: Often missing was a conceptual understanding of the basic life-cycle of the technology, what to anticipate, and how the need for planning changes. See Walton (1989) for an introduction to these ideas.
- Knowledge of the technology: Administrators wanted a better understanding of specific information technologies and their application to libraries and their administrative consequences. Some of these technologies might already be installed in the library, might be contemplated, or might be unknown to the library but be worthy of future consideration. Librarians interviewed identified senior administration's ignorance of the technology as a significant barrier. Senior administrators expressed interest in briefings tailored to their level and added that additional key decision makers on boards, local governments, etc. should be included.
- Management & Coordination: Should small to medium sized libraries have a formalized systems unit, and what should be the unit's role and responsibilities? How to exercise direction, control, and authority where the systems function is fully or partially outsourced (to say city or county automation units)? Should libraries where the systems function is outsourced seek to establish an in-house unit? If so, how? How to optimize the existing administrative structure where the library systems unit exists? Who is in charge? Several librarians in different units, including technical services, mentioned unclear or ambiguous lines of authority for technical service staff and administrators.
- Personnel: The study team observed that all of the libraries visited were understaffed, particularly in the information technology area. Some senior administrators did not seem to recognize the under-staffing. Some were well aware of the problem noting the difficulty of obtaining qualified staff, the

low pay offered by the library, etc. Others noted sources of internal friction in the difference in pay scales and qualifications between technological and professional staff.

- Productivity: Several libraries wished for an external assessment of how to use their existing information technology better. Mentioned was the need for performance measures and time-on-task data in the information technology area to assist in planning. Also mentioned was the need for quick/simple technology and software "fixes" readily obvious to external experts more knowledgeable than the local staff available.
- Procurement, Inventory, & Replacement: Where to find procurement standards and criteria? How to write specifications for technology, space and staff? How to negotiate the best deal? What are the most appropriate inventory control mechanisms? What can libraries realistically do about information technology replacements?
- Specific problem areas:
  - The introduction or expansion of new information technology, for example, OPACS, LANS, web servers, telecommunications, and computer labs;
  - The integration of existing, information technologies such as cd-roms, OPACS, the Internet, and videos to permit seamless access and use;
  - LAN administration;
  - Database and other service licensing in anticipation of the Library of California;
  - Procurement, replacement, and inventory strategies and tactics; and,
  - Reduction of service backlog.
- Change management: How to anticipate and deal with resistance to change due to the introduction of new information technology? How to assist staff to cope with stress? How to work in mixed teams where influence rather than power matters?

This "laundry list" of needs is not unusual for information technology based organizations. A state-wide plan to assist public libraries in this area may be needed.

State-wide Opportunities to Aid Public Library Information Technology Planning

The study team made several observations relevant to a statewide effort at assisting public library information technology planning:

- An important InFoPeople project outcome is the respect accorded any advice offered by InFoPeople.
- Experienced library information technology planners or those with successful implementation experience in all the identified areas of need already exist somewhere in the state, frequently in public libraries. Identifying the experts, matching expert to need, and a standardized mechanism for bartering of services does not.
- Planning documents (e.g., models, forms, policies, procedures), standards, and norms exist in all of the identified areas of need but there is no mechanism to identify, collect, organize, and disseminate the planning documents.
- Workshops and seminars are appropriate to meet some of the identified needs. For example, a generic workshop to include an overview of what the information technology planning process is, followed by hands on planning in a focused area assisted by experienced personnel would meet some needs. A useful resource for these workshops might be Mayo & Nelson (1999).
- A range of information technology planning, communication, and support services can be readily offered at low cost now that the capacity to communicate by e-mail and the web over the Internet is in place in most California libraries due to the InFoPeople project.
- Incentives for planning can continue to be embedded as grant requirements in future initiatives.
- In the areas in which the information technology is new or new to libraries, pilot projects could be funded if the lead libraries chosen were willing to contribute in better defined ways to the planning efforts of the rest of California's public libraries.

In essence, InFoPeople could provide a library, information technology planning infrastructure, to California's public libraries. Some infrastructure elements would be directed by InFoPeople, other elements would be contributed by participating California public librarians (and others), using the model of the *Librarians' Index to the Internet*. The infrastructure would be comprised of a next level of training in information technology planning provided throughout the state by InFoPeople. In addition, there would be an Internet-based mechanism to connect technical service managers in need to experts, plans, standards and norms.

Direct Information Technology Advice and Assistance
Information Technology SWAT teams and IT Circuit Riders

Each of the sites visited by the study team had a ready list of immediate information technology problems, large and small, that local resources could not seem to solve. Some of these problems were the result of lack of skills, information technology management problems, or the need for information technology planning. All of the problems had a significant local dimension. As a result, the study team asked the managers interviewed if there was interest in "Information Technology SWAT teams" and "IT Circuit Riders." There was immediate interest in exploring the idea further.

Information technology SWAT teams or IT circuit riders would have the following basic elements:

- Consist of one or more experts;
- Be constituted by InFoPeople;
- Visit a public library anywhere in the state, perhaps on a regional circuit;
- Visits would be short, one or two days; and,
- Assistance to key managers would include planning for a pre-determined information technology need and where possible resolution of immediate information technology problems.

The emphasize of the visits would be on pragmatic local problem solving, capacity building in the area of planning and local problem solving, linkage to available external resources, and simple confidence building. Some libraries visited indicated their willingness to pay a fee for expert public library oriented advice. Other libraries would need to be subsidized. All libraries could be required to do much of the groundwork prior to the team's visit.

Next Steps for InFoPeople and the State Library Related to Library Operations

The message from the site visits is clear: should InFoPeople and the State Library wish to do so, they can have as great an impact on public library operations as they did when they introduced the Internet service. The moment is opportune because the introduction of the Internet to public libraries focused a spotlight on library operations and gave library managers a glimpse of a better way to manage the organization. The librarians interviewed view this role for InFoPeople as natural and would welcome their assistance. But the vision will fade without the practice, training, incentives, models, and direction InFoPeople and the State Library can provide. The areas in which InFoPeople might make a difference in improved library operations are described in more detail above. Some of the highlights follow.

Public Library Administration

Key findings suggest that InFoPeople and the State Library focus on the following areas:

- Planning: Local library planning teams need to learn pragmatic skills to plan for services, supporting technology, and community involvement.
- Training: Library administrators, key local governors, and funders are new outlets for InFoPeople training. Pragmatic administrative skills emphasizing process over issues, and seminars as often as lectures, would appeal. Intellectually, library administrators know continuous staff training is necessary, but they have not changed their organizations to match their awareness. Can the State Library provide incentives to encourage the sustained capacity for organizational learning?
- Facilities management: This is a neglected area in the information technology revolution. Librarians and architects are designing imaginative new buildings to take advantage of old and new information

technologies. Libraries struggle to retrofit old buildings for new uses. Computer labs add new dimensions to traditional library design. Many struggle for space to house all that libraries are. Can the State Library identify and disseminate facilities management solutions?

- Budget and finance: Librarians capable of prospecting for funds can be trained, although the results of the practice of this skill can seem like magic. The potential trainers of this skill exist within the ranks of public librarians not far afield.

  Librarians can offer their communities services for which the community will be willing to pay. Is this a partial solution to budgeting woes? Would State Library endorsement as well as other inducements patterned after the InFoPeople grants work? Computer labs like the one at Oceanside Public Library teem with cost recovery possibilities.

  InFoPeople appears to have struck a difficult balance between revealing too many of the hidden costs and thereby stifling innovation, and eliminating the nasty surprises that cripple otherwise successful new ventures. Future efforts will have to do as well, at minimum.
- Policy: Librarians need to be policymakers as well as policy advocates. Issue awareness is a beginning, training in the pragmatics of policy development the middle, and a richer community environment the end goal. InFoPeople has made some effort to raise issues and encourage initial experiences in policy making with uneven results. The next step is to consciously train library directors to be policymakers. One small but important aspect of that training should be to recognize the personal, library, and community consequences of any policy action. The lack of such training has already unnecessarily hurt, it need not in the future.
- Library branches: Limited site visit evidence suggests that the battle to win back the hearts and minds and pocketbooks of the community for libraries of size may be shifting from the main library to the branches. Hours, service, and staff are being extended at branch libraries as funding permits. The State Library may wish to confirm this shift of focus and turn its own programmatic spotlight on these neglected libraries and, if the site visits were any indication, their dedicated and talented staff.
- Community relations and strategic partnerships: The study team's sense is that the California communities' image of libraries and librarians, indeed librarians' image of themselves and their work, has shifted for the better as a result of the InFoPeople project. But shifted to what? The image needs to be refined, crafted, and fixed, not by accident and not by others, but by the librarians who have labored to produce the change. The State Library needs to take the lead.

  The State Library also needs to take the lead in building local libraries' capacity to use local media effectively.

  All of the librarians visited relish being on top and having something to offer back to their communities. But that position cannot be sustained if strategic partnerships for mutual benefit are not formed. Many of the libraries visited seemed to lack the courage to ask for what they needed in order to sustain their competitive advantage. Indeed many libraries visited had not assessed what resources would be needed or what community resources might realistically be available. The community plan started the process by asking good questions and demanding librarians become experienced. Now is the time for InFoPeople to follow up with the needed training to involve the community as strategic partners, not just users, before the experience and the opportunity is lost.
- Evaluation: Public libraries can manage the introduction and use of network-based resources and services better. But to do so will require conscious attention to the collection, analysis, and presentation of convincing data to those that matter. Until they do so public libraries will be under-financed, under-equipped, and under-staffed. Public libraries cannot develop these measures alone and their value increases with comparison. The State Library should take the lead in developing meaningful measures of network-based resources and services. Further, the State Library should provide every public library director and planning team in California with the capacity (be it training or technology) to meaningfully use the resulting data for local political and managerial purposes.

For further details and explanations see the above sub-sections.

Public Services Operation

Key findings suggest that InFoPeople and the State Library consider the following in this area:

- Digital collections: Digital collections are now core parts of public library collections. Some libraries should be nudged to spend more on digital collections and local development of web services. The challenge is to make all of the collections, paper or digital, usable by creating a common interface.
- User training: Public service staff spend an increasing portion of their time training rather than answering questions. Some librarians need to learn how to train better. Attention needs to be focused on building local training infrastructure, including instructional design and materials preparation capacity, and addressing equipment needs, reward structures and recognition, etc. What would a practical local public library training support center/unit look like? Could InFoPeople fund competitive grants to find out? Could a requirement be that such a center pay for itself after two years? How might that be done?
- Reduce operating distractions: Reducing the constant minor computer repair at the reference desk and the policing of Internet users probably is best resolved at the local level. The State Library and InFoPeople could make it a priority to use the Internet to better share common public library problems like these, offer solutions (if they meet certain standards), and provide modest rewards.
- Staff training: Public service staff can't keep up with patrons who can't keep up. Training that reduces this problem is a top priority for libraries. InFoPeople's training is highly regarded. The study team makes further suggestions for improvement below, see page 49.
- Reference Desk Computers: Needed internal support services for public Internet services suffered in the rush to meet popular demand. The State Library and InFoPeople should endorse proven ideas, such as an Internet workstation at every reference desk, that encourage otherwise reluctant local funding. This may be particularly true for libraries before Cycle 3 that only received one workstation (from cycle 3 forward 2 workstations were awarded, one for staff use).
- Integrate finding aids across media to ease use: Books, magazines, the Internet (listservs, web pages, chat rooms, etc.), videos, cds: which one to choose when all the user wants is the answer? Maximizing investments in locally available collections requires a common interface that marshals the finding aids of disparate media. What can InFoPeople and the State Library do to speed solutions?
- Computer savvy users: Computer savvy users can be public libraries' greatest ally in the acquisition of local support if librarians let them. Instead, some librarians interviewed live in fear of their presence, and heave a sigh of relief when they no longer show up. An InFoPeople effort to sustain this key group's interest in the library and garner their tangible support for libraries may be in order.

For further details and explanations see the above sub-sections.

Technical Services Operation

Key findings suggest that InFoPeople and the State Library consider the following in this area:

- Upgrade technical skills: Keeping up with new software and technology as applied to libraries is a significant barrier to improved service at all of the libraries visited. The availability of quality relevant training, its affordability, and encouraging the local administrative reorganization of priorities to encourage attendance all need attention. The good news is that InFoPeople's training is highly regarded. The challenge is to provide more of it, better distributed throughout the state and targeted to technical service personnel.
- Aid improved information technology management: The State Library and InFoPeople should consider developing an information technology management support infrastructure to aid local library technology managers. Seminars bringing together appropriate administrative teams to address common management problems would be welcomed.
- Foster needed information technology planning: Local libraries know they need it, they need to know how to do it better.
- Consider direct local information technology problem solving and planning: Some problems need immediate local attention that local resources can't seemingly address. State Library supported IT SWAT teams called out when all other strategies fail may make sense.

- Investigate suitability of cooperative procurement of equipment: Several library administrators wondered if group rates which took advantage of the State's buying power would be a way to reduce dependency on the State Library for equipment grants. The study team did not investigate this option further.

For further details and explanations see the above sub-sections.

Impact of InFoPeople's *Librarians' Index to the Internet*

The *Librarians' Index to the Internet* (LII) <http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/InternetIndex> is self-described as "a searchable, evaluated, and annotated subject directory of Internet resources selected for their usefulness to the public library user's information needs. The indexers are California librarians." Participating librarian indexers are trained. There were four workshops offered during the last fiscal year. There is a monthly e-mail newsletter "containing enhancement news, other news, editing reminders; feedback on edits of their entries to the LII (30 to 40 a week), and a monthly "Possibles List" that includes useful Internet resource possibilities." In addition, there is a separate weekly listserv, *LIIWEEK*, containing the best of the new updates that is sent to over 2800 subscribers.

The impact of the *Librarians' Index* is summarized by one of the reference librarians the study team interviewed:

> "The *Librarians' Index to the Internet* used to be our home page until the library developed its own. It's great because it quickly shows librarians and users a range of interesting sources available on the Internet. Thank you Carole [Leita, the founder and champion of this source], you've saved us many times!"

As Carole Leita would quickly point out, the *Librarians' Index* is a cooperative effort with contributions to the index made by librarians throughout the state. In addition to Carole Leita, there is one 20 hour per week assistant. The *Librarians' Index* is popular, it is accessed 100,000 times per week on average.

The study team heard only two negative comments about the *Librarians' Index*. First, several librarians interviewed found the opening screen and site map to be "too busy, it overwhelms the user" with too many options. This is a matter of style. Perhaps major subject headings with pull-down menu windows containing sub-categories might be better. The second comment made at several locations was, "This is great, I never knew about it!" Ignorance of this resource may be the product of several factors:

- The continuous flow of new Internet users and staff;
- The need to target neglected library groups: new librarians, paraprofessionals, docents, computer lab staff, and new users directly; and,
- Too much reliance by InFoPeople on the belief that everything heard at training sessions trickles down throughout the rest of a local library or system.

More publicity may be needed. But in general, these criticisms are easily addressed.

Libraries struggle with integrating their various collections and those on the Internet into a single finding aid so that users can more easily locate what they want. Would it be useful to make the individual entries of the *Librarians' Index to the Internet* OPAC ready? That is, prepare short MARC records for the Internet items in the *Librarians' Index* and provide an easy means of uploading these records into local library's OPACS.

The *Librarians' Index* is also a model for how librarians, by collective action, can organize a portion of the Internet efficiently and effectively over a sustained period of time. A next step is to distill the experience of founding and managing this resource so that other librarians at the state and local levels may have a road map as they seek to organize their own chosen area of the Internet. Librarians will need to know what to do, why, what resources will be needed, how can they be obtained, key issues and strategies, and more. An evaluator with access to

and the assistance of Carole Leita could create a valuable planning document of use to the State Library and public libraries as they mount similar efforts in the future.

There are a number of areas where the LII model may be applied. For example, more and more California libraries will become active web page creators and servers rather than simply users in an effort to better serve their community's local needs. Some libraries may also choose to work collaboratively with their community to create web-based products and services. Will the cooperative model used by the *Librarians' Index* work here as well? Another possible application of the LII model is to extend the model to other needed reference areas and bibliographic control of the Internet efforts. One reference tool that has promise is the local development of local reference tools providing deeper access to the community. The LII model can also be used in other areas, for example, in the cooperative creation of web-based aids to improve public library operations. Even to a casual observer it is obvious that for any such efforts to succeed a champion, cooperative library support, and specific State Library assistance will be necessary.

Impact of InFoPeople Training Activities

InFoPeople's training activities has defined the project and its success from its beginning. This section reports findings from the sites visited including:

- Scope of InFoPeople training activities;
- Infopeople training highly regarded;
- Offer training in more locations;
- Offer targeted training, consider new groups;
- Offer training in new areas;
- Deliver training in more and different ways;
- Consider post-training uses, support them more fully;
- Continue to provide incentives for training; and,
- Next steps:Introduce the next level of Infopeople training.

InFoPeople's training, already highly regarded, can move to the next level of service with planning, pilot projects, continuing efforts to harness the cooperative energies of California public librarians, and hard work.

Scope of InFoPeople Training Activities

The InFoPeople training program began due to an Infopeople grant requirement that recipients attend training workshops. The early emphasis was on getting the local public library Internet service off the ground. The emphasis shifted slightly as more libraries had Internet service to respond or anticipate the needs of the fledgling services. More recently, beginning in October 1998, InFoPeople training was opened to all. The following are recent data supplied by Cheryl Gould in a March 23, 1999 e-mail to the study team:

> From 10/9/97 through 6/16/99 InFoPeople will offer 177 workshops. 2,876 people have registered for workshops from 10/9/97 through our current registrations to date. Of these, 2592 are from public libraries. From 10/97 to 10/98, there were 1385 people trained - all from public libraries because training wasn't open to non-InFoPeople libraries. Of the 1385 that were trained from 10/97-10/98, 516 people attended non-required workshops. From 10/98 through 6/99, 1441 people have registered. Of these, 114 are from academic libraries, 12 are "other", 1225 are from public libraries, 14 school libraries, 11 from state libraries, 34 special libraries, and 27 from library systems.

InFoPeople provides a range of information about its training workshops on its web site <http://www.infopeople.org/WS/workshop>.

The current InFoPeople training staff, their background, and the workshops they offer include:

- Eileen Flick worked for several years in the Government Documents Department at the University of Southern California, and currently manages electronic information resources for USC. Workshop: Government Resources;
- Cheryl Gould - a professional computer/Internet trainer and author of *Searching Smart on the World Wide Web*. Workshops: Advanced Browsers; Introduction to the Internet; K-12 Resources; PowerPoint; Windows Basics;
- Carole Leita - reference librarian for 20 years, InFoPeople Project trainer and Web manager for 3 years, and developer and coordinator of the *Librarians' Index to the Internet* <http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/InternetIndex/>. Workshops: Finding It: Basic; Ready Reference; Finding It: Advanced;
- Anne Lipow is the founder and director of Library Solutions Institute and Press <http://www.library-solutions.com/>. At Diablo Valley College she teaches a course in "Delivering Library Services: Issues, Theories, and Techniques." Anne was the 1994 recipient of the ALA Isadore Gilbert Mudge/R.R. Bowker award for "a distinguished contribution to reference librarianship." Workshop: Staff Internet Training;
- Susan McGlamery provides Internet training classes to library staff throughout Los Angeles and Orange counties in her role as Reference Supervisor of the Metropolitan Cooperative Library System (MCLS). In addition, she has taught online searching for six years at UCLA's Library School, and legal research at USC Law School. Before becoming a librarian, Susan was a corporate tax attorney in Atlanta. Workshops: Business Resources; Legal Resources;
- Mary-Ellen Mort is the developer and Web master for JobSmart: California Job Search Guide <http://www.jobsmart.org/>, a public library sponsored Web site that served 2.25 million job seekers last year. JobSmart was awarded the American Library Association's 1997 Gale Award for Excellence in Reference and Adult Services. Workshop: Jobs;
- Cynthia Peete, a former Center for Disease Control intern and lecturer to classes in public health at University of California, Berkeley, is an experienced Internet trainer specializing in health and medicine. With a Masters degree in Public Health and a Ph.D. in demography, she produces community information for the Alameda County Public Health Department using Internet resources, teaches Sociology classes at Diablo Valley College, and is a trainer for Library Solutions Institute. Workshop: Health and Medical Resources; and,
- Roy Tennant is the manager of the Berkeley Digital Library SunSITE <http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/>, the author of *Practical HTML: A Self-Paced Tutorial*, and a Library Solutions trainer. Workshops: Staff Internet Training; Web Design, Web Images; Web Management.

Librarians at the sites visited regularly commented on the depth of the InFoPeople instructors' knowledge.

Included at this site <http://www.infopeople.org/WS/workshop> are current workshops and schedules and instructional materials from past workshops. Workshops offered during the first half of 1999 include:

- Finding it on the Internet: Advanced;
- Finding it on the Internet: The basics;
- Introduction to the Internet;
- Jobs resources;
- Legal resources;
- Medical resources;
- PowerPoint basics;
- Ready reference;
- Web images; and,
- Windows basics.

InFoPeople training was highly regarded by all of the librarians interviewed.

The recent InFoPeople catalog <http://www.infopeople.org/Wksp/catalog.html> identifies the following distinctive features of the training currently offered. InFoPeople workshops:

- Are tailored specifically to library needs;
- Are developed and presented by experienced library professionals;
- Offer exercises and extensive hands-on practice utilizing real library reference questions;
- Provide individual workstations on high-speed connections for each participant;
- Supply handouts complete with bookmark files on disk;
- Accommodate varying levels of expertise by providing individual assistance from experienced lab assistants;
- Offer post-workshop assistance via e-mail.

Many librarians that were interviewed would be content if InFoPeople simply continued to offer the workshops it does.

InFoPeople Training Highly Regarded

When asked what were the principal benefits of the InFoPeople project, training topped everyone's list. As one respondent remarked, "You can buy the PCs, but not the training that is relevant to us." The following list identifies key elements of the InFoPeople training image that may be useful as InFoPeople selects next steps in this area. InFoPeople training:

- Charges modest fees: Present fees do not present a barrier to most of those interviewed.
- Anticipates our needs: "I always send staff to the new training sessions even if I don't know what they are about. They offered stuff we didn't know we needed but based on our past experience we know we will need it in the future."
- Is relevant to what we do: "If we went to local training on the same subject the focus would be on business applications. Then when we got back to work we would have to translate what we learned to what we do. InFoPeople provided training that we couldn't find anywhere else in the community."
- Is hands on: "They always make us practice right there doing stuff we will need to do when we return home."
- Builds confidence: "At the end of the day I may not know it all, but I know I can do it."
- Is high quality: "They set the standard for quality right away…"
- Breaks the bureaucratic logjam: "When our deputy director got back from InFoPeople training she did what we'd been telling her to do for months. And she acted like it was her idea."
- Has the right class size and facilities: Several noted that the classes were not too large and the facilities fine.
- Forces us to do what we had to do: "In order to register for the course we had to send an e-mail message. I'd been putting off learning how. But now I had a reason and a deadline."
- Open: Several people at each site remarked that they were glad InFoPeople had opened their training to others.
- Didn't end when the equipment arrived: "InFoPeople didn't say 'here is the equipment' and run." Most thought it was a good idea to require the staff training as part of the InFoPeople grant. "Innovation must be accompanied by training."
- Involves personal relationships: Several remarked on the approachability and warmth of the trainers. Many felt they were on a "first name basis" with the trainers. Several librarians interviewed specifically commented on the e-mail follow-ups, "They care that we learn what they have to teach." And for some, "the car ride to and from the training with peers from surrounding libraries was as valuable as the training itself."

It is hard to argue with, "It was the best training I ever had." And, "It was worth its weight in gold." Any comment by those interviewed about the InFoPeople training program began with, they "should continue with what they are doing." The following sub-sections suggest additional directions that the training program might pursue.

Offer Training in More Locations

InFoPeople training sites need to be closer to public libraries. This was the consistent message across all libraries visited (outside of those that were already training sites). The yardstick used seemed to be that the training site should be within an hour-and-a-half to two hours one-way driving distance or less. InFoPeople should consider paying the costs of those who have to come from farther away than whatever public standard is adopted as a courtesy. If InFoPeople decides to expand its training function, expanding the number of training sites would be wise.

Offer Targeted Training, Consider New Groups

Many of those interviewed suggested targeting training sessions to specific groups. For example,

- Library directors: Topics ranged from a basic "private" introduction to the Internet, to practical policy making perhaps focused on filtering/censorship/first amendment issues, vendor and site license negotiating, and other administrative consequences of the introduction of digital technologies to public libraries.
- New staff: This group was frequently mentioned as targets for training. It may well be that the State Library has much to say to this special new group of librarians which sets a professional tone, acquaints these new librarians with resources and services, shares strategies for coping with "freshman" problems, and addresses key issues of current professional interest within the state.
- Systems team: This team might include the library director, library systems head, and systems head from local government if the systems function is outsourced in whole or in part. These sessions could be focused on specific issues like network security or be focused on more general managerial issues. Information technology planning could be taught. The point would be to get these people talking and working with one in another in an environment where they could find out how others were addressing similar problems.
- Library procurement agents: Procurement is a bottleneck at all the libraries visited. Training in procurement might reduce some of the problems.
- Library technicians: All libraries have problems with information technology repair. Training of designated staff can reduce some of these problems. A series of training sessions leading to a certificate might be appropriate.
- Key local officials: Those interviewed mentioned budget analysts for the library, mayor or city manager, and library board head. The intent would be to provide normative guidance, vision, opportunities, and a nudge by sharing what others had done and how.
- Library volunteer/docent coordinator: The contrast between libraries that had active, successful volunteer efforts and those that did not was noticeable even on a brief site visit.
- Independent scholars: At every library visited, there was at least one independent scholar presented to the study team as a local user of the Internet service. One was reluctant to admit that she was learning to read Hebrew. This person had spent precious half-hours locating an available course on the Internet, registering via the Internet, downloading instructional materials, completing homework, taking exams, and conversing with instructors. Some scholars are independent because they are forced to be. Some scholars will accept help if it is offered from a trained staff with supporting resources available.
- Adult literacy students: Partnerships with these adult learners are historic, the Internet has many exciting literacy uses.
- Children's Librarians: Children are a key population, they swarm Internet services. Library services can be improved dramatically with training. Some of the training should be in seminars where norms, issues, problems, and solutions can surface.

  Some of the training offered should focus on helping kids to use the Internet to have fun (e.g., beenie babies, wrestling, teen zines). This might seem an odd emphasis. But the study team noted that most of the librarians interviewed only talked about the Internet's educational value. But the children interviewed all mentioned having fun as one of their principal uses of the Internet. Everyone needs training in how to

have good, safe, fun in a new playground. Librarians could learn from kids, librarians could teach kids, InFoPeople could play a role.

Many children need to improve their Internet search skills, need to learn how to evaluate Internet based information better, and, of course, need homework help. Children's librarians need help too. Many children's librarians need training in creating and sustaining partnerships with their local schools, and the Internet provides a perfect excuse to get teachers and librarians together.

- Home school students and teachers: The public library is a traditional haven for home school students and their teachers. There are sources and services which public libraries could offer if librarians were trained, motivated, and their talents cooperatively engaged.

- Foreign language readers: The Internet has expanded the collection of foreign language materials available at any local library possessing an Internet connection. But many librarians interviewed did not know how to gain access to the wealth of material available and want to learn more to meet immigrant, migrant, and student demand.
- New to the community and the potentially new: The public library plays a traditional role in orienting new community members. The Internet offers a number of opportunities to improve this process. Potential new community members use the Internet to learn more about the community. The library could do much to improve the community's digital image.
- Library system level trainers: Several library systems affiliated with the libraries visited offered successful training to members of the library system on Internet related topics. The development of library system level training capacity should be aided.
- Librarians who would train local government staff: The InFoPeople project made libraries among the leaders in the introduction of the Internet among local government units. Libraries have introduced and trained local government staff on the Internet. Several of the libraries visited have the opportunity to do more. This train-the-trainer program should be designed to be ready to use by librarians upon their return. InFoPeople should address in the training session how to maximize the libraries' investment in training local government staff. More bluntly put, training of local government staff should not be just a nice thing to do.

  Training targeted to competitors for local discretionary funding such as police, fire, harbor, and parks might be particularly useful.

  A training series might be contemplated rather than one workshop.
- Librarians who would train the local business community: Several libraries, for example Oceanside Public Library with its computer lab in place, mentioned that they had been approached by local businesses asking for training for their staff. All libraries identified users who were professionals and small business people who relied on the library for Internet training. This train-the-trainer program should be designed to be ready to use by librarians upon their return. InFoPeople should address in the training session how to maximize the libraries' investment in training local business staff. More bluntly put, training of local business staff should not be just a nice thing to do. For example, when are fees for training appropriate? A training series might be contemplated rather than one workshop.
- Librarians who would train local school officials and teachers: Libraries and schools are traditional allies. None of the libraries visited had taken full advantage of the obvious partnership opportunities available due to the introduction to the Internet. In some cases, the local library was the only source of Internet access in the community. In other cases, no one is providing teacher training in curricular uses of the Internet, uses in which the library might play a role. Again, the partnerships which result should not just be a nice thing to do. The State Library may have an opportunity to jointly plan initiatives with the State Department of Education in this area.
- Library users directly: Learning modules which support point-of-use and small group instruction (e.g., videos, web-based presentations) on frequently requested topics (introduction to the Internet; how to buy, install, and use a computer; panicked parents; health; employment; etc.) would be well received.

InFoPeople training is entering a new phase. One way for InFoPeople to strategically consider its role is by asking, "Who should be trained?"

Offer Training in New Areas

All of the librarians interviewed offered new topics for InFoPeople training should it expand. Note the context is expansion of effort rather than re-focusing. All librarians liked the topics offered currently by InFoPeople. Suggestions for new areas of training included:

- Web page and server development and management: All libraries are interested in developing their own web pages or expanding existing web pages. Some are interested in allowing users to develop their own web pages with technical assistance and space from the library. None of the libraries visited really grasped what was involved beyond the need to know HTML. This is an area ripe for a project similar in shape to the public Internet access project that started InFoPeople.
- Planning for new service development: The Internet will enable the provision of new services. Even experienced library planning teams may need a refresher in how to best plan for these services.
- Information technology planning: Supporting the service and the community requires a planned technology base. All libraries visited were interested in help in this area.
- Planning for community involvement: How and when to involve the community in using a new service, in providing a new service, and in supporting a new service all were topics of interest to the libraries visited. The community partner and community plan requirements have given participating libraries fresh experience with the need for community involvement. Now may be the time to refresh the skills.
- Evaluation of network-based resources and services: Librarians know they should do something but do not know what it is.
- Procurement, negotiating site licenses, and vendor management: Most libraries expressed interest in knowing more about this aspect of digital service provision.
- Policymaking: The issues are raised, positions considered, policies written. Library directors now need training in the pragmatic skills of policy making.
- Small Business Entrepreneurial Areas: Local small businesses are interested in electronic commerce. Local business people want to explore this area for employment. For example, one library had an avid group interested in investment and brokering. Others observed were interested in real estate. Librarians also need training in locating and presenting information of use to small businesses, for example, local economic and statistical data.
- Consumer services: As businesses develop on the Internet, library users need help taking advantage of these activities: locating retailers, evaluating them, locating the consumer affairs learning community, etc. In addition to the traditional role of information provision, other library services might be offered. One area that needs attention is helping users in their purchase of information technology. This can lead to related processes such as setting computer workstations up and effective use. A training module around this area with supporting web services would be welcome at every library visited. Other areas include automobile purchase, travel planning, and the list expands.

  In addition to addressing a popular training need, the State Library could raise service standards for frequently asked library questions. The State Library could also introduce an effort to build cooperative supporting information infrastructure using the new information technology.
- Traditional frequently asked topic areas in a digital environment: A quick list includes some topics already offered by InFoPeople: law, health, genealogy, taxes, alternative lifestyles, government resources, employment and careers.
- Information technology troubleshooting for staff and users: Librarian and library user both need basic computer repair skills these days.
- Stress management: This request came up repeatedly at the sites visited.
- Public relations and presentation skills: Some librarians expressed discomfort with presenting to or training community groups, few had produced radio and video presentations, some had not prepared news releases, and none had advertised on the Internet.
- New information technology updates: Librarians told the study team that they rely on InFoPeople to apprise them of new technology and applications that libraries should be thinking about or implementing. A session introducing some of these technologies applied to libraries would be of interest.

- Use of Library of California licensed databases: Librarians will need training in the use of the Library of California databases should they be offered. This was of interest/concern to all libraries visited.

Librarians praised the selection of existing training topics and anticipate that InFoPeople will continue to provide them with what they need to know. The potential training topics sketched above could take InFoPeople in a number of new directions.

Deliver Training in More and Different Ways

There was interest at all of the sites in alternative means to deliver InFoPeople training including:

- Expanded use of the Internet: Use of the web, including its video and audio capabilities; e-mail and chat along with courseware (e.g., WebCT).
- Production of training for existing mass media: Preparation of material for television, radio, newspapers, and magazines that train and promote the library's role. Training videos produced for local cable programs were mentioned several times.
- Videoconferences: Several libraries visited have this technology in place, others have access to it. This technology combined with workstation access might be very useful.
- Low-tech solutions: These include audio tape talking books (for the drive in to the training site and back), video tape, cd-rom and DVD, even paper "cheat sheets" and handouts (already offered by InFoPeople).
- Multi-media, interactive learning environments: When the study team mentioned this approach someone in the group would always refer to it as the Berkeley model. Interactive instruction can be delivered at a distance if existing technology is thoughtfully chosen and combined. This approach seemed to have the most approval as the delivery mechanism of choice (after face-to-face).

Librarians at each of the sites visited had InFoPeople training uses to recommend for all of these mechanisms. These distance education tools may reduce the need for face-to-face training and increase general skill levels throughout the state.

Different group training approaches should also be considered beyond the workshop. Most commonly requested was the seminar approach where experienced professionals could share and reason together as they struggle to address common problems. Seminars also allow less experienced professionals to learn from those more experienced (and vice-versa). Providing this type of learning environment may be less work for InFoPeople but be no less meaningful for librarians.

Initiatives to offer workshops, courses, and participate in degree granting programs are also of interest to the librarians interviewed. A possible collaboration between the State Library and the School of Library and Information Science of San Jose State University (SLIS) to create a Virtual School of Library and Information Science (VSLIS) and a *Library Learning Channel* is exciting

Consider Post-Training Uses, Support Them More Fully

InFoPeople presently supplies a range of post-training support to those trained in its workshops. Many of the PowerPoint presentations (and other materials) are available on the InFoPeople web site (some librarians interviewed were unaware of this feature), handouts and exercises accompany most workshop sessions, and e-mail and phone follow-up between instructor and person trained is not unusual. InFoPeople trainers care that the people trained learn and many of the librarians voluntarily commented on this aspect of the post-training support offered. The study team identified several additional ways InFoPeople could support the post-training use of the information presented, particularly in light of the potentially new groups of people trained, new topics, and new uses. These include:

- Training of staff upon return from the workshop: InFoPeople could support staff training by providing for each workshop trainee a prepared 15-30 minute presentation, a brief video, opportunity to practice presentations in-class, and materials for longer (say half day) workshops. Librarians need more support in

this area than either the librarians interviewed initially imagined or InFoPeople suspects. The issue is not local librarians' ability to digest and create presentations (although the bar could be raised here as well), rather it is having time to do the presentation right and an opportunity for InFoPeople to more fully control the message. What is needed is a set of plug-and-play, ready-to-go modules which returning librarians can tailor to their audience.

- Training of users by staff: Materials should be prepared by InFoPeople for: independent use, point-of-use instruction, small group instruction, and for additional advanced use. Audio, video, and web-based materials as well as paper handouts and "cheat sheets" may be appropriate. Users need the information to be presented to them in a number of ways. The libraries visited often rely on only one (verbal instruction) or two (a short handout) ways. The quality of the handouts examined were uneven, incomplete, or unnecessarily exhaustive. Again, high quality, plug-and-play, ready-to-go upon return from training modules are best.
- Practice for the trainees: Librarians need to have practice exercises (with answers) to reinforce and retain what they learned at the workshop. InFoPeople frequently supplies written exercises. The librarians interviewed think these exercises are great! Needed are interactive tutorials to reinforce learning and next step exercises for trainees ready to graduate to the next levels.
- Notes for trainees: Not everything that is presented at a workshop is immediately relevant to the trainee. But a number of librarians commented that they wished they had detailed InFoPeople notes to refer to later on. Apparently the existing presentations available on the InFoPeople web site were not enough (some librarians interviewed did not know about them). These notes could be constantly updated on the web as new ideas occur.
- Publicity: InFoPeople could prepare press releases, short videos, or scripts for short interview programs for release to the local media upon the trainee's return. The purpose of this publicity would be to acquaint the community with new Internet resources, inform the community about new library expertise, and reinforce the notion that the library is the place to go for Internet services and training. This area is almost completely neglected by librarians, and InFoPeople could fill the void.

Some might object that this is doing it all for the librarian. Some might remark on the time and cost of preparing the materials. But if existing training efforts are to be maximized and multiplied with less loss of quality between trainer and end user, this is what it will take. InFoPeople training, by example, has raised the standard for training in California throughout the profession. InFoPeople, by example, can raise the standard for post-training support materials to make the many purposes and uses of training easier to achieve.

InFoPeople should also continue to pursue longer duration instruction including courses, certificates, and degrees where appropriate and in partnership with other institutions. Perhaps most evident is the need for a sequence of training sessions to address larger topics, whether this be by course, certificate, or other means.

InFoPeople should consider an Internet-based, mailing list, current awareness service to deliver pre- and post-training information. This service, perhaps patterned after Edupage <http://www.educause.edu/pub/edupage/edupage.html>, could post news flashes, announce upcoming training, offer new technology briefs, note the availability of relevant software, offer short descriptions of ideas that work, or mention new reference sources, etc. This service could be an expansion of InFoPeople's existing IFP Workshops Announcement List <http://www.infopeople.org/mailinglists/ifpwork.html> or something new.

Continue to Provide Incentives for Training

InFoPeople wisely required training in order to qualify for Internet equipment grants. As this new phase for InFoPeople begins, new incentives, some required, should be considered. A couple ideas mentioned by librarians during the site visits include:

- Reimbursement where needed: A principle to consider is that everyone should pay the same price to attend a training session. Librarians who have to travel four hours each way to attend a training session obviously are paying more.

- Incentives for the reluctant: Of particular concern are personnel, like branch managers and paraprofessionals, who are too valuable or too undervalued to be allowed time off for training. Can incentives be found to train staff who would otherwise not attend?
- Rewards for good practice: A reward for good practice that precedes or follows training and that uses skills or ideas taught during training reinforces learning. For example, offer a voucher to partially pay for future training if the trainee offers proof of performing some good practice suggested by the workshop.
- Awards for new practice: One idea endorsed by every library is to competitively award a laptop and projector to libraries who establish train-the-trainer programs in their libraries. A sketch of the requirements might include the following:
  - The library would have to show a change in administrative structure (minimum: establish a training committee);
  - Develop a plan to train all staff (and volunteers) approved by appropriate local administration;
  - Present a six month schedule of training activities; and,
  - Post instructional materials used in the local training sessions on the library's web page.
- Requirements for participation in grant programs: Most librarians liked the fact that InFoPeople didn't just "give us the equipment and run." Should the State Library partner with other State Agencies, foundations, or high-tech industries similar training requirements should be considered. That said, the training requirement for community partners may have been too much. So, thoughtful attention to any requirement will be needed.

Finding the right match of incentives and requirements to encourage high quality public library services is not easy. InFoPeople's Internet grant program offers a good model for the next phase of InFoPeople activity.

Next Steps: Introduce the Next Level of InFoPeople Training

InFoPeople has successfully established a highly regarded training unit that has enabled effective implementation of a public library Internet service throughout the state. The State Library has a training asset that is the envy of every other State Library in the country. The State Library has a unit whose public statements and training programs command immediate respect and thoughtful consideration at every California public library. InFoPeople has an opportunity to reinvent itself, now that the initial phase of getting the public library Internet service off the ground is all but complete.

The study team suggests that key elements in the next generation of InFoPeople training include the following:

- Target specific segments of the public library environment for training: There is an opportunity to train library administrators, technical services personnel, indirectly train library users, and continue to train public service personnel;
- Expand the training topics offered: There is a great deal of opportunity to improve library operations by better planning, upgrade of administrative skill levels, and introduction of information technologies for use in operations;
- Expand training formats and mediums: Offer seminars, forums, lectures, and other formats in addition to workshops. Some audiences will not tolerate lectures.
- Expand the range of training mediums used: Reaching all of the audiences needing training will require use of a range of distance education techniques. InFoPeople will need to build the capacity to project its message in a variety of media and mediums.
- Consider offering pre-training preparation: When someone registers for training a range of pre-training activities might be offered. These pre-training activities might increase motivation, manage expectations, narrow the gap between the most and least knowledgeable students prior to training, and generally increase the utility of the training sessions offered.
- Give still greater attention to post-training use: InFoPeople can increase the diffusion of its training and accurately deliver a greater amount of intended content if it gives greater attention to the uses made after training by those trained.

InFoPeople should specifically target more segments of the public library environment with an increased range of offerings using a variety of formats and mediums, and with greater attention to pre and post-training activities. An InFoPeople student should obtain, as in the past, a new awareness of the topic and new skills. In addition, the new level of training offered by InFoPeople should provide a structured introduction to a rich learning community interested in the same domain, placement on a step-by-step process of growth in the training topic, and a clear path to future self-improvement.

Routinely offering the proposed next level of InFoPeople training will not occur overnight. But understand InFoPeople's training achievement to date:

- Introduced the notion that continuous training for California librarians was necessary even desirable;
- Established a state-wide training program to begin to offer sustained librarian training;
- Began to establish the service infrastructure necessary to sustain a librarian training program; and,
- Brought the next level of information technology needed to deliver training to the librarian's doorstep;

All of this in less than five years imagine what the net five years could bring. Planning, pilot projects, continuing to direct the cooperative energies of California public librarians in productive directions, and hard work will make it so.

The Next High Impact Applications for California Public Libraries

InFoPeople's introduction of the Internet to public libraries transformed their day-to-day practice. This was a case of the right technology, properly introduced, and at the right time. The study team asked those interviewed if they knew of an equivalently transforming information technology application available today for public libraries. The short answer was they did not. Most of the applications suggested expanded, extended, or refined existing information technology use. These applications, if properly introduced, will have a powerful effect on public libraries and their communities, however. What follows, with brief descriptions, are some of the high impact information technologies that public libraries may wish to use and InFoPeople may wish to introduce in the near future:

- Web servers: At present, public libraries listen but rarely speak in the digital environment. Many of the librarians visited realized that to play a central role in their community's digital landscape they would have to add this capacity. All of the libraries visited had library web pages. But often these were developed by volunteers and did not reside on public library servers but on those of the local Internet service provider. Some libraries had done much more: developing their own web page and that of the local government's too. Four next steps involve:
  - Bringing the server capacity in-house, within the library, including training the staff to maintain the technology;
  - Creating a standardized and organized digital work environment to promote rapid and effective development and use;
  - Training public library staff so that creating information for the web environment is as routine as word processing; and,
  - Developing and employing novel ways to promote community information exchange and use.

  Many libraries visited see the utility of this application but do not have the internal capacity at present to make library web servers a reality yet. InFoPeople, recognizing the need, already is offering technical assistance and space to thirteen libraries to develop their home pages. This effort might well be expanded.
- Cooperative web-based solutions to common public library problems: Public libraries face common problems, whether it is to respond to frequently asked questions (e.g., employment), help frequent library users (e.g., home school students), or respond to common library operations issues (e.g., public access policy and policymaking). A cooperative response initially organized by the InFoPeople and the State Library that is created and delivered via the Internet (like the *Librarians' Index to the Internet*) maximizes what any one library can offer while minimizing the work involved.

- Local Area Networks (LANS): Many public libraries see the merit in linking all of their internal computers in one, or generally two (public and internal) networks to extend the usefulness of their existing workstation base. Some libraries have active plans to introduce LANS in the near future. All are concerned with technically administering these LANS.
- Intranets: With an internal LAN an Intranet can be born. An intranet introduces the same communication capacity as the Internet internally. Internal, secure, but shared web pages, e-mail, listservs, chat, databases, etc. are available to improve internal communication. Establishing and using this tool effectively will require assistance.
- Computer labs: One need look no further than the Oceanside Public Library's computer lab (one of the sites visited by the study team) to witness the major positive impact on public library services a computer lab can make. Libraries will need help in planning, installing, and managing these labs. Libraries will need help to adjust to the subtle but profound change in the public libraries' role in the community.
- At home use: Already local users access their library (usually a brief web page or OPAC) via the Internet. But few libraries have developed effective services for home use. The paradigm still favored is the user must come to the library. This paradigm is obsolete. The State Library and InFoPeople will have to nudge some libraries to change their thinking, services, and the ways they evaluate themselves.
- Integration of existing public library collections: Public libraries have collections in different media: some collections they own, some they only have access to; some collections are highly organized, others are in chaos - what a mess! There are no quick fixes at present. Available solutions are laborious, costly, time consuming, and messy. But, all libraries feel the need to gain better control over the collections to which they have access. The benefits to public library users are obvious. Public libraries will need help in keeping up with the options and applying new solutions as they emerge.
- Digital learning environments: Some public libraries recognize that existing and yet to be invented information technologies offer users a powerful new way to learn if they can be effectively combined into an interactive digital learning environment. A learning environment links the user to people in the same situation and those who help improve the situation. A learning environment treats a specific question (e.g., how do I write a resume) in the context of a learning process in which the question is one step (how do I write a resume, how do I find a job, how do I fill out a job application, etc.). There already are public libraries that want to lead in the introduction of such environments in their community by offering them at the library. These public libraries need help keeping up with developments and getting actively involved in experimental efforts. Pilot projects that integrate existing technologies may already be worthy of funding.
- Community instructional design centers: Continuous training is becoming a fact of organizational life these days. But many businesses do not have the resources to maintain an instructional design center in-house. Kinkos, and similar commercial concerns, are beginning to fill the void to a limited degree. Public libraries in some communities can have a major impact in this area, particularly if they offer one-on-one, point-of-use instruction. Libraries may have a need for such a center themselves. Public libraries will need help to plan and prototype model centers, train staff, and manage such facilities.
- Kiosks: Woodland Public Library is considering installing a library kiosk in a shopping area in the new, still under construction, part of town. The kiosk might have a computer with an Internet and library connection, a phone connected to the library for reference and other transactions, a fax, and even a place to return books. Not a bad solution while the library waits for the construction dust in the new neighborhood to settle a bit.
- Low tech solutions: Palmtop and laptop rentals, public fax and scanner, digital camera loaners - the library as the place to try out the latest information technologies. Those public libraries that subscribe to this form of public service need several types of help: identification of relevant new technologies, acquisition of these technologies for free (if manufactures realize the service libraries are offering) or at reduced cost, and instruction in effective presentation and use.

None of the public libraries visited were aware of all of the information technologies with potential public library application. One role InFoPeople and the State Library might play is to provide technical briefings to public libraries. These briefings could and should take a variety of forms and use a variety of media. What matters is that public libraries have a current awareness of potential applications and have links to librarians who have experience with the information technology.

Snapshots of Libraries Who Did Not Participate in the InFoPeople Project

Introduction

An original objective behind the InFoPeople project is the role of the State Library to aid public library provision of equal access to information, and in this case access to the Internet, throughout the state. InFoPeople has clearly made an effort to connect the "have not" libraries in the state to the Internet. One set of questions posed to the study team as they began their onsite evaluation was:

- Is InFoPeople's role as equipment and connection provider over, now that 46% of the state's public libraries have InFoPeople sponsored equipment and connections?
- Is it not still InfoPeople's main objective to level the playing field among the state's public libraries and better ensure equal access to the Internet throughout the state?
- What would it take for InFoPeople to have the remaining 54% non-InFoPeople library sites connected to the Internet?

The study team believed these questions had merit but that the original research design could not adequately address these questions. In essence, we were asking the InFoPeople "have" libraries to speak for the "have-nots." This section summarizes the evaluation team's efforts to consider these issues and identify the reasons why some libraries chose not to participate in the InFoPeople project.

Results

The following results are exploratory and suggestive rather than generalizable to any population. Each of the actual libraries were assigned descriptive names.

Small Southern Coastal California Public Library (3 outlets)

The library director was aware of the InFoPeople project. The critical reason for this library not participating in the project was lack of a technical services librarian since last June (10 months). The library is presently interviewing people but "good technical service people, to fix the equipment, plan, and run things, are hard to come by." There is a total of four staff (including the director). Two of the branches are undergoing building and re-modeling programs.

Presently, there are four workstations with Internet capability, the first obtained a year and a half ago in August 1997. Two were obtained in January 1998 via a "systems grant" and a private foundation donated one workstation for the children's room. The library has its own web page created by the nephew of one of the librarians. A problem faced and met was a facility built of concrete in the late sixties. This made wiring both difficult and costly.

The library director seemed aware of contemporary issues faced by connected libraries (e.g., chat rooms, overuse of e-mail by those Canadian tourists...). Two key problems she would like to solve in the future: IT planning (she was interested in State Library help) and space (at the moment she is trading study tables for computer workstations and about to run out of room).

Small Rural Southeastern California Library (2 outlets)

The library is co-directed – the senior director has 31 years experience and the new director was hired in September 1998. The interviewer began by talking to the senior director but was immediately switched to the new director "because she knows more about the topic." The interviewer's sense was that the library was in transition between a director about to retire after 31 years and a new person recently brought in. Major changes to library operations were on hold until the transition was complete.

The library has had one workstation for the staff for two years. There are requests for public access Internet service but demand is not heavy. There was a sense that this was a conservative community. The new director mentioned censorship and filtering as issues and noted that there had been few (if any) outside grants. The new director repeatedly mentioned the need to go slow and make the right decisions for the community and repeatedly stated her need for more information to be used later.

The new director responded in a cautiously favorable manner to the idea of the State Library providing IT planning assistance. She felt that when she was able to move she would first consult with libraries within the local library system where there was a "wealth of information" on public access Internet services.

Small Central Valley California Public Library (2 outlets)

The library director was aware of the program and quick to say they had not participated. There are six employees. The county covers 900 square miles in the central part of the state. The libraries have two Internet workstations that they obtained from the local Library System about two years ago.

The InfoPeople grant was perceived to be for "big libraries," not them. When asked to be specific the library director mentioned that the requirements to participate in the grant were too great for her:

- There were no local partners available, anyone who had computer knowledge already had jobs and could not take time off to go to the training sessions and "work for the library for free;"
- The training was too far away, the one library staff member who had some computer knowledge and interest doesn't drive (which means that two people, one a driver, would have to go), most of the staff are not really computer literate; and,
- There were other hidden (but apparent to the director) costs. The library director said, "it is a grant and you shouldn't get something for free, but I just couldn't meet the requirements attached to the grant."

The library director made a strong plea for local training in the Central part of the state. Do you have enough equipment? They always need more equipment was the reply. Are you interested in an IT planning SWAT team or workshop? Yes, depending on how it was done.

Small Northwest California Public Library (4 outlets)

This library has two staff and one public access Internet workstation for the last two years. The library director attended a meeting about the InFoPeople grant, thought she may have applied, but was rejected. Her chief problems with the grant were: not being able to obtain a community partner who could commit the required time to the project (those that she knew worked and could not take the time off), and the training was too far away (2-3 hours one way).

Current issues for the library include the need for more connections and reluctant public service staff. The expense of the equipment is not an issue. Training of the public (many who have never used computers) will be a big challenge. IT planning will be a big problem. Suggestions for InFoPeople: local training (within 1 1/2 hour drive).

Small Rural Northwest Mountain California Public Library (3 outlets)

The library had one public access workstation at each outlet for two years thanks to a private donation, the county paying various monthly bills, and the local State Office of Education paying the long distance phone charges. The main library will add a second workstation this fiscal year when the county gets connected to the Internet. The library is not fully automated. The community ranges from some who have never used a computer to those who have an Internet connection at home.

The library director knew about InFoPeople but decided to go with the local option (private donation). The big problems with the InFoPeople project are the grant requirements and the lack of local InFoPeople training. Presently, librarians must drive four hours to the nearest InFoPeople Training site, so the person must go the day before. The library is under-staffed.

Suggestions for the future include: local training, support for an IT planning SWAT team, and a partnership between InFoPeople and the local library system to hire a person to do local technical support via phone and in person when necessary. Training needs include building the comfort level of the staff with the technology and new technologies, hands on reference (like that presently being provided), and knowledge of and training in the new databases to be offered by the Library of California. The local State Office of Education has video-conference facilities and the library director was interested in using the technology as a supplement to more local training offerings.

Conclusions

The libraries contacted appreciated the interest of InFoPeople and the State Library in their experience and obtaining their suggestions for the future. The following conclusions are grouped around the original research questions for this mini-study: connections, InFoPeople non-participation, and next steps for the libraries and InfoPeople.

Connections

The evaluators think it is significant that each of the libraries had found a way to get connected to the Internet on their own. Indeed, one library had its own web page. It is important to note that the State Library either does not know of these connections, or knows (via annual FSCS surveys or surveys for the California Library Directory) but does not make this information publicly available. Access to this basic data could go along way toward resolving the question of which public libraries are connected and which should be targeted for modified connectivity grants.

This limited data suggests that the State Library might be further along than it suspects in its connectivity goals for the state's "have not" public libraries. Obtaining the equipment for a minimal Internet connection was not an insurmountable barrier for any of these libraries. These findings suggest that it may be time to de-emphasize this aspect of the program. It might be appropriate for InFoPeople to target grants to the class of small libraries like those surveyed here who managed to get equipped on their own but who need other help. The help offered would have to be onsite or local. It might be offered in partnership with the local library system and/or local units of state government.

InFoPeople Non Participation

Two of the libraries suggested that a principal reason for not filing a grant application was because the only community partners they could identify worked and could not take the time off (without pay) to attend the training sessions. All of the libraries found the training sessions too far away to consider attending and thus a significant - barrier to applying for an InFoPeople grant. All had limited staff, which made staff absences to attend training more difficult. All voiced concerns about the level of staff information technology competence. Summarizing, the librarians phoned were on the lower edge of information technology competence and knowledge without any easy way of improving their skills. One of the libraries had a reluctant library director and conservative community. One received a local donation of equipment without having to meet any of the InFoPeople's requirements.

The evaluators believe, based on the onsite visits to participating libraries, that the grant requirements (including the community partner), while sometimes challenging, significantly contributed to the success of the project in the library and community. However, in the non-participating libraries, the community partner and

training requirements proved to be significant barriers to entry. InFoPeople might consider alternative requirements or other incentives, including some type of subsidy for community participants to attend workshops where necessary.

Next Steps

Training

The consistent message across all sites surveyed was the need for training to be delivered locally – local meaning no more than an hour and a half drive in one direction. All of the librarians interviewed praised existing InFoPeople training offerings. In addition, librarians asked for help with IT planning, updates on current information technologies and their use in libraries, and training in computer repair and maintenance.

Information Technology (IT) Planning

Small libraries especially feel the need for help in this area. It is likely that there will not be one solution but rather a range of solutions, ideally with coordination from the State Library. Options discussed included an IT SWAT team traveling to local libraries, training sessions, minimum standards and specifications, and distance education, including video-conferencing.

Information Technology (IT) Maintenance

A recurring need is for someone to maintain the information technology in the library. This need may be greater in small towns where commercial repair is unavailable. It is unlikely that one solution will apply but several options include training and distance education. Another approach is an IT maintenance person as a "circuit rider" or developing relationships with the local schools or other organizations.

Local Partnerships Supported at the State Level

At one library the computer equipment had been privately donated, the county paying some monthly bills, the library system providing some training and resource people, the local Office of Education paying long distance connection charges, etc. At successful libraries local partnerships are a way of life. In many small communities there are a group of government agencies, local organizations, and small businesses facing similar problems related to information technology. InFoPeople and the State Library may wish to seek to partner with other units of State government to meet common local community needs for information technology support.

Training the Public

Four of the five sites saw the looming need to train the public to use the Internet and felt under-prepared. One direction for InFoPeople to consider as a next phase is a grant package of equipment, training, and support for training the public in Internet use. Provision of a laptop and projector would help local libraries provide such training. One possible obstacle to overcome will be librarians being uncomfortable in doing such training or speaking in front of groups.

Equipment, Why Not Laptops?

One problem mentioned by several libraries in this survey was the growing lack of space to support workstations and other computer-related items. One library told of trading limited study tables for computer workstations. One role for InfoPeople might be to encourage the use of laptops with networked connections and power available at each study table, allowing for multiple use of the space as needed.

Future Prospects

Based on the above survey, the differences between the InFoPeople "haves" and "have nots" may be much smaller than expected and the current needs quite similar. Perhaps programs with fewer or more flexible requirements, with areas that must be addressed in the application made clear, and with specific rewards if certain minimal standards are achieved might encourage more to apply. The sense of the interviewer was that in four out of the five cases these were not Internet "clueless libraries," these were libraries with real problems which InFoPeople and the State Library can, with some imagination, address.

Findings from this part of the evaluation also highlight the difficult decisions that have to be made in the allocation of limited InfoPeople project money. The fact of the matter is that InFoPeople training efforts are not currently supported at a level that would allow the localized training requested by these libraries. Future project activities that would assist these libraries require additional project resources (interactive video conferencing for training, an IT planning SWAT team, IT circuit rider, etc.). The marginal costs to provide support to these rural and somewhat isolated libraries is significant compared to libraries in other regions of the state.

This survey also identified the need for a better data collection and reporting process regarding the ownership and availability of workstations (staff only and public access) in libraries throughout the state. For planning and development of the "next generation" of Internet or IT related projects, it will be important for the State Library to have an accurate and up-to-date data base of descriptive information related to the public library's use of Internet and related information technologies.

Leveling the Playing Field

There can be little doubt that the InFoPeople project had the intended effect of leveling the information technology playing field. Should InFoPeople declare victory and move on, continue funding technology grants in hope of reaching all, or try something else?

Several observations can be made based on the brief site visits and telephone interviews:

- InFoPeople leveled the information technology playing field: All agreed that InFoPeople had significantly leveled the information technology playing field. All thought a level playing field was important and most thought it was mandatory.
- Reducing the digital divide is the State Library and InFoPeople's job: Most thought that leveling the playing field in the state was the State Library and InFoPeople's primary job. But beyond this there was a genuine, deeply held feeling that leveling the playing field was the profession's job, InFoPeople had just agreed to take it on.
- Many did not feel the job was done: When the study team raised the question of whether leveling the information technology playing field regarding Internet access was done, few agreed. Many had stories, not confirmed, about specific libraries in their region.
- What's to be done: When the study team asked, what do you think InFoPeople should do, there were two common reactions. Most simply felt InFoPeople should solve the problem, many by simply continuing to offer the equipment grants. There were one or two at every site who felt more strongly. Either verbally or in writing these librarians essentially said InFoPeople should directly intervene, go to the library or local government (bypassing the library) and find out what it would take to introduce the Internet for some period (typically a year) on a trial basis. In essence, these librarians felt that rather than having requirements, InFoPeople should determine the local community's requirements and meet them, for a year, in these cases.
- No one actually knows which libraries or communities are without free public Internet access or why: Apparently no one is certain where the problem, if it remains, exists. Apparently no one knows why those libraries that do not have Internet access do not have it. The common perception, unconfirmed, is that lack of a public Internet service is not primarily due to geography or poverty but is due to mismanagement.

- The branch library problem: Several of the libraries visited had some, but not all of their branches equipped with public Internet access. In at least one case, funding was available to equip all branches. The study team was not able to determine why all branches were not equipped or how it was decided to equip some and not others. One potential worry is that library system managers are waiting for external funding agencies to fund unequipped libraries because of the belief that there will be no further reward if all branches are equipped or they desire to use the funding for other purposes.
- The Internet service as a tease: All libraries reported that the use of existing Internet workstations was at 95% of capacity or greater. As one librarian noted, "We are still only teasing our users with Internet access because they can't get on or can't stay on for long." Does leveling the playing field stop with the tease?
- Not every community has a library. Should they be denied free, public Internet access: One study team member driving to an interview at a rural library system noted the number of small communities that did not have a library but did have community buildings, be they shops, schools, or local government. Is public Internet access needed here? Should the State Library be involved?
- Impact of the Gates Learning Foundation: On April 8, 1999 the Gates Learning Foundation (GLF) announced that it will distribute more than $11 million for the purchase of computers, Internet access, and training for public libraries in under served communities throughout California (May 1, 1999, *Library Journal 124*, p. 11). This announcement came after the site visits and few of the actual impacts are known at present.

Perhaps it bears repeating that these are impressions gathered from site visits rather than anything certain to represent all California librarians' views.

One reasonable course of action is to better specify the problem. InFoPeople or the State Library might fund a study to identify those libraries (or communities) without free public Internet access (perhaps beginning with the annual statistical survey data and then by cross-checking with regional library system administrators). The study might then sample some of these communities, or directly intervene in some cases, to see if further State Library intervention would yield free public access to the Internet for these communities.

A second reasonable course of action is to begin to reward libraries and library systems that already have Internet access at each library. Indeed, in this latter case, it might be a requirement that in order for a library system to obtain certain kinds of funding all branches must have public access Internet workstations as a pre-condition. Reluctant local libraries might see these incentives and locally fund the needed connections.

InfoPeople Operations and Services Examined

The study team examined InFoPeople's operations to better understand them and to assess InFoPeople's ability to sustain and expand existing services to California public libraries. The study team did not directly consider InFoPeople's efficiency, financial management, or accounting as this was out of scope. Interviews were conducted with all of the InFoPeople staff and the relevant State Library personnel. The State Library's view of InFoPeople is discussed below on page 67.

A brief profile of InFoPeople and its activity appears in Appendix 2-4 page 105. InFoPeople can be characterized as a lean, three person virtual office with oversight by the State Library and contracted outside assistance as needed (particularly for training). Project Coordinator Holly Hinman directs the organization and handles administrative issues, Carole Leita handles technical issues and runs the organization's web pages including the *Librarians' Index to the Internet*, and Cheryl Gould is the office manager. These roles are further outlined in the Project Contacts section of the InFoPeople web page <http://www.infopeople.org/Proj/ contacts.html>. The study team's impression of the InFoPeople staff, echoed by interviews with librarians throughout the state, is of a dedicated, highly professional, well-coordinated, friendly unit.

InFoPeople is at a natural juncture in its life-cycle within the State Library. This may be an appropriate time to review InFoPeople's administrative status within the structure of the State Library. The State Library may

also have much to learn from InFoPeople's management practices and delivery of services methods. This may be an appropriate time to incorporate those lessons into the larger organization.

Should InFoPeople's role change, particularly in the training area, additional staff may be needed. Some of the potential areas that will require staff include:

- Office support: If the number of people trained increase and the types of training offered vary, the complexity of scheduling, registration, billing, post-training follow-up, publicity, etc. will increase. The study team's sense is that InFoPeople is at capacity already.
- Adding training sites and site management: A frequent complaint was that the training wasn't local enough. Should InFoPeople decide to address this complaint, sites will have to be located, assessed, and technical improvements made to the facilities. Existing and future training sites require ongoing site management and negotiation with facility owners. A barrier to the expansion of the existing number of training sites may be lack of staff to locate and make arrangements for them.
- Instructional design: InFoPeople maintains tight control on the quality of the instructional materials provided. This has paid off in recognized high quality. Staff is needed in this area to maintain quality. Staff is needed for new workshops, new support for post-training activities, and development of materials in different media for workshops and distance education (to include further web page development, listservs, chat, courseware, videos, talking books, etc.).
- Curriculum development: InFoPeople also retains tight control on training content with similar high quality and consistency results. Supervision of new course design, post-training material packages, and multimedia offerings will require staff attention.
- Web and other media content development: Selecting, acquiring, and preparing content for InFoPeople's activities may well become a separate full time job.
- Add staff should training expand in numbers or direction: Interviews with the librarians visited suggest that it might be appropriate to expand InFoPeople training to different groups and offer different topics. New staff may be necessary to meet this demand.
- Information technology circuit riders: Should InFoPeople decide to support the circuit rider concept, regional teams of information technology experts may be needed.
- Information technology planning teams: Should InFoPeople decide to support this concept, regional teams of information technology planning experts may be needed.
- Reduction of the digital divide team(s): Several tasks remain in this area: assess who the "have not" libraries are, determine those who would benefit from an Internet service, do what it takes to make the service at these locations a reality. Should InFoPeople decide to continue this task, it will need new staff.

InFoPeople uses its personnel wisely. Requests for additional personnel should be considered in the context of how successfully InFoPeople has made use of previous staff.

InFoPeople appears to pride itself on being a virtual office and making effective use of idle existing space of other organizations. The study team views this approach as an asset as well. The greatest need for space in the near term will be related to the establishment of regular training facilities in more areas of the state. But InFoPeople may well decide to invest in arrangements similar to the one at Cerritos Public Library or other existing InFoPeople training sites. Other state agencies or community groups may well have an interest in cooperatively establishing computer facilities, for example, computer training labs, in some of the locations considered.

State Library View of InFoPeople Activities

Introduction

The study team met with California State Library <http://www.library.ca.gov/> staff to discuss aspects of the InFoPeople project from the perspective of the State Library. In particular, the study team sought input from the State Library that:

- Identified the key benefits derived from InFoPeople for the public library community and the State Library;
- Identified the key issues that arose/arise for the State Library to maintain, continue, and further the InFoPeople initiative;
- Reviewed State Library management and administrative activities related to the InFoPeople project; and,
- Explored future directions for InFoPeople.

The study team collected this information through individual interviews and focus groups with California State Library staff that had direct involvement with InFoPeople, as well as a review of selected InFoPeople documentation.

Findings

The interviews, focus groups, and documentation review suggest that there are issue groupings regarding InFoPeople. Thus, the findings below reflect those key issue areas rather than the individual data collection activities.

Administration and Management of InFoPeople

One individual in the State Library is responsible for the coordination and management of the InFoPeople project. This individual is also responsible for coordinating all California State Library technology projects/initiatives such as the Gates Library Foundation, the E-rate, InFoPeople, and the Library of California. While this individual is not responsible for the actual technology implementation aspects of the various projects, this person is charged with coordinating and integrating the projects to ensure an integrated approach through which California libraries derive the maximum benefit from each initiative.

This person faces tremendous challenges in carrying out such a charge, as:

- The various initiatives/projects have some overlap, but more often pursue different goals;
- There is no central data repository at the State Library that identifies each library's technology infrastructure, technology grant application/participation, or other key variables;
- Budget documents and other relevant planning data exist by project, rather than across projects, libraries, and initiative objectives; and,
- The initiatives present differing restrictions and limitations, and there is no legislated (or other) mandate to bring the initiatives together.

Even with these challenges, however, there is a sense at the State Library that there is a need to bring these initiatives in line so as to create an efficient and effective means to augment technology and technology applications in California libraries.

InFoPeople Budget

The study team requested budget information regarding the InFoPeople project to determine the primary cost categories of the initiative. Overall, a total of $6,429,650 of LSCA/LSTA money has been expended on InFoPeople beginning with the since 1992/1993 fiscal year (see Figure 2-2).

Of that money, approximately:

- $2,910,573 was used to purchase workstations and/or program expansion;
- $1,274,149 has been devoted to various training initiatives;
- $1,029,628 supported enhanced public access;
- $816,630 supported telecommunications-related costs; and,
- $111,760 supported the Librarians' Index to the Internet.

Thus, the majority of InFoPeople project funding provides public libraries with equipment for public Internet access and librarian training.

Figure 2-2

InFoPeople Project
1992/93-1998/99

FY	LSCA TITLE	PROGRAM	$ AWARDED
1992/93	I	Internet Planning & Training	$98,050
1993/94	I	Internet Workstations	$110,000
	I	Internet Training	$135,334
	III	Expanding Access to Resources	$41,443
	III	Internet Telecommunications	$337,342
1994/95	I	InFoPeople Workstation Upgrade	$281,856
	I	Public Access to Internet	$385,220
	III	InFoPeople Workstation Upgrade	$44,444
	III	Internet Telecommunications	$253,788
1995/96	I	InFoPeople Program Expansion	$322,495
	I	Public Access to Internet (Support)	$602,965
	III	InFoPeople Project General Support	$164,828
	III	InFoPeople Program Expansion	$178,191
1996/97	I	InFoPeople Program Expansion	$439,311
	I	InFoPeople Training Support	$404,360
	III	InFoPeople General Support	$77,638
1997/98	LSTA	InFoPeople Telecommunications	$225,500
		InfoPeople Training & Support	$636,405
		InFoPeople Index to the Internet	$37,290
1998/99	LSTA	InFoPeople Program	$1,578,720
		Librarians' Index to the Internet	$74,470
Total			$6,429,650

Role of the State Library

A frequent refrain throughout the site visit was that of defining the role of the State Library in technology-based initiatives for California's libraries. Although participants expressed ideas differently, their comments centered on the following key roles for the State Library:

- Lead: The InFoPeople project provided the State Library substantial credibility in the public library community. Participants realized the need for continued leadership (that both set top-down direction, but also listened to the librarians in the field) in technology-based initiatives.
- Set minimum standards for library technology infrastructure: There was much discussion of the need to establish and pursue minimum technology infrastructures within California's libraries so that libraries could take advantage of existing and emerging applications. There was an awareness that these standards would change over time, but that the standards would assist libraries to realize their technology needs.
- Assist libraries to attain the minimum technology infrastructure: With standards comes the need to assist those libraries that are not at the recommended technological levels. Through various grant and other programs, a role of the State Library is to help libraries create that infrastructure.
- Determine quality of service standards: As a result of such technology-based programs as InFoPeople, participants realized that such programs placed new requirements on public libraries for library staff development as well as library programming. The State Library could assist in identifying the core competencies of library professionals and staff.
- Develop digitized content: The InFoPeople project centered on getting public libraries connected to the Internet. Once connected, users need to get to content. There is a need to digitize various unique collections, license databases, etc., which brings economies of scale and provides access to desired content.
- Don't do it all: There was a sense that the State Library could not be all things to all libraries. This was particularly the case with the issue of librarian training (an InFoPeople service provision discussed later). The State Library is looking to partner with State Library schools and other entities to develop training centers that provide various types (e.g., technical, hands-on) of training to differing library populations -- executive, staff, management, etc.

Together, these roles present significant challenges to and opportunities for the State Library.

Benefits of InFoPeople

When asked to discuss the benefits of InFoPeople, participants identified two types of benefits -- those accrued to public libraries, and those accrued to the State Library.

Public Library Benefits

From the perspective of the State Library, InFoPeople assisted public libraries to:

- Get connected to the Internet at an early time (1994);
- Boost their image within their communities as public Internet access points;
- Begin thinking about information technology in a broader sense, and realize the need to plan for technology development and implementation;
- Change the culture from using technology in a support/administrative capacity to a means of providing expanded and enhanced services;
- Move in new directions and services;
- Enhance communication between libraries and libraries (e.g., to deal with technology, staffing, and planning issues) and their communities (e.g., through the community partner);
- Create a level technology playing field by assisting primarily unconnected public libraries; and,
- Receive much needed technology/Internet training.

These benefits were derived through, as one participant stated, "a relatively small investment" on the part of the State Library.

State Library Benefits

For its part, the State Library derived the following benefits from the InFoPeople project:

- Demonstrated State Library leadership and foresight by carving out an Internet connectivity program well in advance of the "big Internet boom," as one participant indicated;
- Lent credibility to the State Library as a leader in technology areas;
- Fostered increased communication between the State Library and public library staff and managers;
- Enabled the State Library to assume a basic level of technology infrastructure on which to build future programs and services; and,
- Established the State Library as *the* significant provider of new information technology training for libraries statewide while significantly updating the technology and Internet skills of public librarians as well as State Library staff.

Thus, the State Library participants expressed their overall pleasure with the InFoPeople project.

Issues and Barriers

The InFoPeople project does present several issues and concerns for the State Library. To initially create, maintain, and plan for future InFoPeople directions requires/required the State Library to:

- Develop a technical expertise that the Library staff did not necessarily have in place;
- Provide substantial (at least initially) technical support for which there was neither additional staff nor technical expertise;
- Evolve roles as needs in the field changed over time; and,
- Manage expectations on the part of public libraries as the State Library simply could not provide unlimited resources, equipment, support, or training for InFoPeople participants.

Moreover, the State Library soon learned that participation in a project such as InFoPeople required various unanticipated issue resolution such as:

- Becoming a de facto state Internet Service Provider (ISP) through the creation of an 800 number, as there were not initially ISPs in all the areas where InFoPeople project participants resided;
- Learning and creating new procurement procedures for InFoPeople project resources;
- Assisting public libraries develop IT plans;
- Developing a comprehensive training program, as well as the creation of regional training centers and facilities;
- Contending with the need to upgrade earlier InFoPeople project participants while continuing to bring unconnected/non-participating libraries into the project; and,
- Developing technical standards to aid in the support of InFoPeople equipment.

Over time, therefore, the State Library has needed to adapt to a continually evolving technology, field, and project environment.

It is this latter issue of continual adoption that raised perhaps the most contention among State Library staff. Some staff argued for the need to curtail State Library support for some InFoPeople activities such as training, as there was the sense that the State Library could not "do it all." One State Library staff member interviewed went so far as to claim that there should be a "real cost to the libraries for InFoPeople training. The current $50 fee doesn't come close to covering the costs of training." Others stated, however, that "we get other benefits from

subsidizing the training, like knowing that our librarians have the ability to use the Web." One noted that although the training fee was minimal, it raised $37,000 to date (February 1999).

Future Directions for InFoPeople

The State Library staff members interviewed reacted to and suggested a number of future directions for InFoPeople. The following is a summary of the suggested directions for InFoPeople:

- Spin off into a training and IT coordinator function: All agreed that eventually all California public libraries that wanted an Internet connection would have one very shortly. At that time, the primary purpose of InFoPeople (connecting libraries to the Internet) is achieved. However, there is substantial (and continued) demand for training and technology consulting.
- Increase InFoPeople workshops: Related to the training component of the project, there was a suggestion to increase substantially the types of workshops offered to include the E-rate, Gates Library Foundation, telecommunications, technology planning, resource building, and Z39.50.
- Focus on public access: While the initial step to ensure public access involved workstations, the future may require moving beyond simple connectivity.
- Set standards/levels of expertise: Given the various technology programs available to libraries and coordinated through the State Library -- E-rate, Gates, LSTA, InFoPeople, Library of California -- there is a need for the State Library to assume a minimum level of technology infrastructure, services, and staff expertise. Such standards would enable the State Library to better plan current and future technology-based programs.

The State Library staff clearly saw the convergence of the Library of California, Gates Library Foundation, E-rate, LSTA, and InFoPeople initiatives/programs. The ultimate goal for the State Library, therefore, is to integrate the programs in such a way as to provide California libraries with the maximum benefit from each program with minimum overlap.

Finally, an important issue to consider is the factors that seemed to promote the local library's ability to leverage InFoPeople training and resources. One factor was the presence of library administration and leadership that saw information technology as a tool to better provide community services. Oftentimes, these administrators or another in the library "championed" the use and application of the new technology. Another important factor was the degree to which the local library already had contacts with community leaders upon which the new computer-based services and resources could build. Equally important was the presence in the library of a systems or technology person who integrated the workstation and the training into library services. Libraries with these factors present were better able to leverage InFoPeople awards and training than those libraries where these factors were not present.

Finally, an important issue to consider is the factors that seemed to promote the local library's ability to leverage InFoPeople training and resources. Key factors included:

- Leadership. Leadership at the Library Director and Deputy level who had, or actively sought out managerial level knowledge of the technology effectively led their library, local government, and were seen as a local resource.
- Planning. Those libraries that treated the pre-planning process seriously were rewarded by being better able to seize unexpected opportunities.
- Prospecting for Funds. Libraries that succeeded used the InFoPeople grant as seed money to develop other sources of funding for Internet services. These libraries had designated staff who actively sought funding for library projects.
- Technology managers. Those libraries that trained or hired good technology managers immediately benefitted from their expertise.
- Partnerships. Libraries that asked how this technology could help local groups, be they government agencies or the local Kiwanis succeeded in gaining new resources. The library offered these groups a complete package of aid from initial training, ongoing resource discovery, and mutually rewarding services.

Together, these factors formed the basis for more successful InFoPeople participation.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Chapter two presents the findings from 122 interviews conducted by the study team from February 20 to March 3, 1999. These findings:

- Identify principal benefits of the InFoPeople project;
- Discuss the utility of the Community Plan and Community Partner requirements;
- Identify key impacts of the InFoPeople project on library users and communities;
- Discuss key impacts of the InFoPeople project on the libraries' administrative, public service, and technical service operations and services;
- Examine the impact of InFoPeople's *Librarians' Index to the Internet*;
- Consider the impact of InFoPeople's training activities;
- Identify some of the next, high impact information technology applications for California public libraries;
- Offer snapshots of libraries who did not participate in the InFoPeople project;
- Discuss potential next steps for the State Library and InFoPeople to level the information technology playing field;
- Consider InfoPeople operations and services; and,
- Report on the State Library's view of InFoPeople activities.

These findings suggest a range of potential actions for both InFoPeople and the State Library. But not all of them are of equal importance, nor may all of them be achieved in the next fiscal year. Prioritizing these actions is the topic of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3: ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE INFOPEOPLE DIRECTIONS

INTRODUCTION

The evaluation study found numerous impacts of the InFoPeople project on various project communities -- users, public library staff, State Library staff, and InFoPeople project staff (see Table 3-1 for a summary of key findings by project communities). This chapter presents recommendations for future InFoPeople project design, activities, and purpose in the context of an already successful Internet connectivity project that needs to reconsider its scope and intent as the millennium approaches.

Readers should consider that the recommendations presented in this chapter result directly from the:

- Stage I data analysis of InFoPeople quarterly reports;
- Stage I participating library and community partner surveys;
- Site visits with selected participating InFoPeople libraries conducted in February 1999;
- Telephone interviews with non-participating and non-connected public libraries conducted in March 1999; and,
- Follow-up interviews and correspondence with various study participants conducted throughout Stage I and II data collection activities.

These various data collection efforts identified several InFoPeople issues (please refer to the Stage I final report available at <http://www.infopeople.org/Proj/eval/index.html> and Chapter 2 of this report) from which emanate the recommendations and strategies in this chapter.

RECOMMENDATIONS, OPTIONS, AND STRATEGIES

Based on the findings from the various study data collection efforts, as well as the wealth of technology initiatives and opportunities in the state, there are numerous possible recommendations and strategies for the InFoPeople project. The recommendations and strategies discussed in this chapter intend to offer the State Library a number of possible options to consider as the InFoPeople project prepares to address the future needs of California's public libraries and the communities those libraries serve. The options also address State Library needs and concerns as the State Library begins to consider other network-based projects such as the Library of California initiative, Gates Library Initiative (GLI), and Education Rate (E-rate). Table 3-2 summarizes the recommendations and the impacts of those recommendations on the State Library and the public library and user communities.

The State Library should regard the number of options, strategies, and recommendations in this chapter as an opportunity to reflect upon the future of California's library and community-based information technology portfolio. The situation is such now that California has a wealth of technologies available -- InFoPeople, GLI, E-rate, and Library of California. When viewed as a technology investment portfolio, it becomes clear that the State Library has numerous options, possibilities, and opportunities to consider in deciding its technology investment strategy(ies). This chapter, therefore, offers the State Library a variety of recommendations to assist the library in its decision-making and planning processes.

Table 3-1. Summary of Key InFoPeople Project Study Findings.	
Principal Benefits of InFoPeople	• Provided access to the Internet throughout California • Reduced the digital divide in California • Improved information literacy • Returned the library to the center of local community services • Altered and improved library collections and services • Fostered the development of electronic commerce locally • Stimulated new and enhanced partnerships and funding • Increased pride in local communities • Fostered local creation of local information • Enhanced the State Library's reputation among local public libraries
Key Impacts of the InFoPeople Community Plan and Partners	• Stimulated project planning and management in libraries • Solicited community involvement in the library • Brought technical expertise to the library from sophisticated technology users • Created a new type of volunteer for library Internet-based services
Key Impacts of InFoPeople on Library Users and Communities	• Generated interest in the library • Attracted new users to the library • Attracted non-traditional users, including non-readers and "techies" (those with information technology knowledge). • Enhanced ability to find information not in the library's typical holdings/collections • Provided ability to communicate with people all over the world on a variety of topics • Provided a means to seek job/employment information • Provided a means to be introduced to the Internet in a "non-threatening" environment (e.g., without career or other pressure)
Key Impacts of InFoPeople on Library Operations and Services	• Served as a catalyst for planning and managing library technology resources as a whole • Created a need to develop broad and far-reaching technology architectures • Impacted on library space and ergonomic design issues, as not all library facilities could implement Internet-based technologies • Required new library staff skills to manage and use Internet-based technologies and resources • Such skills enhancements were provided through the InFoPeople training programs • Required additional funding for enhancing technology services in the library • Created a need to consider a host of policy issues such as filtering, acceptable use, and network security • Provided an opportunity to better integrate with the community • Provided an opportunity to serve the public in new ways such as Internet-based reference • Served as a catalyst to rethink collections development in a digital/networked environment

Variations on the Current InFoPeople Project

The site visits and other evaluation project data collection activities identified several possible modifications and/or variations on the InFoPeople project as now defined. Presented below are the recommendations and strategies designed to redefine InFoPeople.

Maintain the Current Program

As defined and implemented, the current InFoPeople project -- essentially a means to get public access workstations into public libraries as well as a means to provide library staff with technology and Internet training -- is highly successful.

To further this success, the State Library:

- Maintains the current training effort; and,
- Implements a Cycle 5 that targets those libraries yet to receive a workstation and/or need to have an existing workstation upgraded.

Using this strategy, the State Library continues its current funding, management, and operations aspects of InFoPeople, while the libraries continue to receive workstations, workstation upgrades, and training.

Awards-based Cycles

InFoPeople is rapidly reaching the workstation/participation saturation point under current program operations of the "workstation-for-application" process. Rather than continue the cycles of technology for participation, the State Library can migrate InFoPeople to an awards-based initiative that could:

- Create/foster competition among and between public libraries for innovative applications of public Internet access;
- Provide workstations for specialized library needs, such as reference or youth services; and/or,
- Support the development of specialized digital collections development designed to mount electronically special collections held in particular libraries that benefit the entire state.

This type of awards- or targeted-based InFoPeople project would move InFoPeople in the direction of supporting various other California technology initiatives, as well as provide public libraries additional means to develop particular digital services.

Table 3-2. Summary Strategies and Options and Implications.

Strategy/Option	Implications for State Library	Implications for Library/Community
Variations on the Current InFoPeople Project		
Maintain Current Program	• Continues InFoPeople in current incarnation • Does not provide new initiatives • Targets non-connected libraries and those needing upgrades	• Receive more workstations/workstation upgrades • Receive InFoPeople training • Do not receive additional technology planning assistance • Provides additional/ better equipped public access workstations
Awards-based Cycles	• Fosters competition/ innovation among libraries • Creates a targeted InFoPeople initiative • Promotes digital content development that benefits the state	• Creates a more flexible InFoPeople project for those connected libraries • Allows libraries to digitize special collections
A New and Flexible InFoPeople	• Establishes a more flexible and tailored initiative • Expands InFoPeople to other community-based organizations for increased public Internet access • Provides incentives for innovation and initiative in libraries through the creation of Centers of Excellence	• Provides libraries with a more broadly defined initiative • Rewards innovation and creativity • Creates more public Internet access points in communities through expanding InFoPeople to include community-based organizations
SWAT Team for Non-participating Libraries	• Connects the remaining public libraries to the Internet • Informs the non-connected libraries of the various issues and benefits to Internet connectivity • Provides the State Library with 100% public library Internet connectivity • Resource expenditure and effort level required to connect remaining libraries	• Brings the Internet and computer equipment to non-connected libraries • Requires technology and Internet skills to access and use the Internet and computer equipment • Generates on-going and maintenance costs

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Table 3-2 (cont'd). Summary Strategies and Options and Implications.		
Strategy/Option	**Implications for State Library**	**Implications for Library/Community**
	Technical Assistance and Training	
Concentrate on Training	• Moves resources away from technology to training • Eliminates technology application process • Provides means to ready public librarians for future technology developments and initiatives • Provides means to explore and develop alternate training technologies -- e.g., online, computer-based training, distance education • Establishes regional training centers • Fosters attendance to training workshops • Expands training community to other libraries, users, and local/state government agencies	• Provides a systematic source for professional development and training at a reasonable cost • Keeps librarians in touch with technology trends • Provides opportunity to gain expertise and "how to" experience on a broad range of topics • Provides training opportunities in numerous formats that users and library staff can take advantage of at their own pace • Brings technology training sessions closer to home • Offers opportunity to build training center/lab in own library • Lose funding source for public access workstations
Customized Training and Technical Support Entrepreneur	• Provides basic training and support services to public libraries • Permits local institution flexibility in customizing training and technical support services • Removes InFoPeople from overall management control of State Library	• Allows libraries to augment basic training and support services by hiring InFoPeople • Requires libraries to fund additional/special training and technical support services
	Redesigning InFoPeople	
Support the Library of California and Other Technology Initiatives	• Removes routine management/administration from State Library • Provides a single point of coordination for California technology initiatives • Takes advantage of InFoPeople's reputation for service and support • Provides digital content for California's libraries • Creates less overlap among various technology initiatives	• Provides single point of contact for state technology initiatives • Provides technical support, training services, and technology planning assistance • Provides means for access to digital resources developed by the state • Maximizes benefit to California libraries by having coordinated technology initiatives

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Table 3-2 (cont'd). Summary Strategies and Options and Implications.		
Strategy/Option	**Implications for State Library**	**Implications for Library/Community**
Redesigning InFoPeople (cont'd)		
Expand Digital and Network-Based Resources	• Provides a means for statewide online database licensing negotiation and coordination • Fosters digital content development • Creates an expanded expert-reviewed Internet source guide through the *Librarians' Index* to the Internet	• Provides access to a range of online resources – licensed databases and peer-reviewed Internet sites • Provides assistance in developing digital collections and content
Statewide Data Coordinator, Collector, and Reporter	• Creates a single entity that is responsible for collecting information technology-related data • Provides information regarding library technology implementation and use for decision-making purposes • Moves data management, analysis, and presentation functions out to InFoPeople	• Provides a statewide database on library information technology • Permits benchmarking and other comparative data analysis for decision-making and planning purposes
Collaborate with Other State Programs/Agencies	• Establishes InFoPeople as the coordinator and technical expert for various state and/or local technology initiatives • Provides technical expertise/assistance to a number of government agencies • Provides statewide/local exposure to the State Library and InFoPeople	• Serves as a means to further integrate with local government institutions • Expands public Internet access to other areas of the community
Subsume InFoPeople into Other State Library Activities		
Fold InFoPeople into Other State Library Projects	• Liberates resources devoted to InFoPeople for other purposes • Removes management burdens of project • Lose "name brand recognition" of InFoPeople	• Lose means to get additional/only workstations into library • Lose only systematic source of Internet and technology training

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A New and Flexible InFoPeople

California public libraries are at various levels of Internet connectivity, technology infrastructure, and technology sophistication. Thus, a single-focus technology initiative such as InFoPeople, while quite appropriate during the first several cycles, is increasingly serving the basic workstation and connectivity needs of fewer libraries. To mitigate this circumstance, the State Library could modify the InFoPeople initiative to incorporate a number of acceptable services, technologies, and user-based organizations. For example, a new InFoPeople could:

- Allow participating libraries to receive technology planning and consulting grants to assist them prepare for electronic network-based services;
- Permit libraries to apply for training equipment (e.g., laptops, projectors), videoconferencing equipment, and/or other types of experimental equipment for technology-based services;
- Support the development of Centers of Excellence for a variety of activities such as technology and Internet training, distance education, digital collections development, Web site development, and community outreach into various community-based organizations, etc.; and/or,
- Expand InFoPeople to include community-based organizations other than public libraries - e.g., community centers, senior centers, teen centers - particularly in areas of the state where public libraries are few, open a small number of hours, or continue to resist Internet connectivity.

This new InFoPeople would provide libraries with the ability to receive technology-related assistance that better meets their needs, enables the State Library to provide seed money for innovative projects, and expands InFoPeople to foster increased public Internet access throughout the state.

SWAT Team for Non-participating Libraries

There are still California public libraries that have yet to connect to the Internet in general, or participate in the InFoPeople project in particular. To ensure 100% connectivity, the next cycle of InfoPeople targets specifically those non-connected libraries by:

- Developing a SWAT team that would go to the particular libraries (upon a one page letter of request);
- Providing Internet user training sessions; and,
- Providing consulting sessions to help the library director and staff understand the importance of Internet connectivity, how it can be accomplished, the process of getting and installing the equipment, developing appropriate policies, and working with local government.

The intent is to make a "final effort" to encourage those with no or very limited Internet access to leapfrog forward.

Technical Assistance and Training

Key aspects of the InFoPeople project include the technical support, training workshops, and content development (e.g., *Librarians' Index to the Internet*) provided for the library community. Study participants identified these services as a substantial strength to the project, one that they would like to see developed even more.

Concentrate on Training

Without a doubt, one of the true successes to the InFoPeople project is the initiative's training component. Not only is the current training offered respected and appreciated by the library community, but there is a sense that additional types of training -- technology planning, technology architecture, PC basics -- are necessary. There is also a sense that the training efforts should target other audiences, such as public library directors and managers, government officials, and users.

One possible strategy is for InFoPeople to get out of the technology implementation business and concentrate solely on training. A solid training foundation exists and can serve as a strong launch pad for a variety of State Library-sponsored training programs. The advantage to such a move is that the State Library can influence

the training curriculum so that library professionals (and others) are better prepared for future network- and technology-based initiatives such as the Library of California.

Introduce the Next Level of InFoPeople Training

InFoPeople has successfully established a highly regarded training unit that has enabled effective implementation of a public library Internet service throughout the state. The State Library has a training asset that is the envy of every other State Library in the country. The State Library has a unit whose public statements and training programs command immediate respect and thoughtful consideration at every California public library. InFoPeople has an opportunity to reinvent itself, now that the initial phase of getting the public library Internet service off the ground is all but complete.

The study team suggests that key elements in the next generation of InFoPeople training include the following:

- Target specific segments of the public library environment for training: There is an opportunity to train library administrators, technical services personnel, indirectly train library users, and continue to train public service personnel;
- Expand the training topics offered: There is a great deal of opportunity to improve library operations by better planning, upgrade of administrative skill levels, and introduction of information technologies for use in operations;
- Expand training formats and mediums: Offer seminars, forums, lectures, and other formats in addition to workshops. Some audiences will not tolerate lectures.
- Expand the range of training mediums used: Reaching all of the audiences needing training will require use of a range of distance education techniques. InFoPeople will need to build the capacity to project its message in a variety of media and mediums.
- Consider offering pre-training preparation: When someone registers for training a range of pre-training activities might be offered. These pre-training activities might increase motivation, manage expectations, narrow the gap between the most and least knowledgeable students prior to training, and generally increase the utility of the training sessions offered.
- Give still greater attention to post-training use: InFoPeople can increase the diffusion of its training and accurately deliver a greater amount of intended content if it gives greater attention to the uses made after training by those trained.

InFoPeople should specifically target more segments of the public library environment with an increased range of offerings using a variety of formats and mediums, and with greater attention to pre and post-training activities. An InFoPeople student should obtain, as in the past, a new awareness of the topic and new skills. In addition, the new level of training offered by InFoPeople should provide a structured introduction to a rich learning community interested in the same domain, placement on a step-by-step process of growth in the training topic, and a clear path to future self-improvement.

Routinely offering the proposed next level of InFoPeople training will not occur over night. But understand InFoPeople's training achievement to date:

- Introduced the notion that continuous training for California librarians was necessary, even desirable;
- Established a state-wide training program to begin to offer sustained librarian training;
- Began to establish the service infrastructure necessary to sustain a librarian training program; and,
- Brought the next level of information technology needed to deliver training to the librarian's doorstep;

All of this in less than five years - imagine what the net five years could bring. Planning, pilot projects, continuing to direct the cooperative energies of California public librarians in productive directions, and hard work will make it so.

Develop Local Training Centers

As part of a larger move towards focusing on training, InFoPeople could also implement a number of local training sites per InFoPeople region for which public libraries would bid competitively. This would:

- Provide consistent state-of-the-art training centers within each InFoPeople region on which InFoPeople staff could rely for training workshops;
- Establish a set of regional technology labs/training facilities in public libraries that libraries in the region, schools, universities/colleges, public, and city/local government agencies could rent and/or use for additional training; and,
- Foster creativity and partnership within the bidding communities.

A certain amount of the next InFoPeople cycle would be targeted to support libraries wishing to move into developing training centers.

Training Vouchers

Another variation on the InFoPeople training effort is to distribute training vouchers to public libraries and other library, school, and city/local government agencies. These vouchers would entitle the recipients to:

- Training awards worth a pre-specified dollar amount; and/or,
- Training on specific topics and/or courses.

Moving to a voucher system would encourage additional training attendance from library staff, offer training to a broader state community, and demonstrate the cost of the InFoPeople training services/workshops.

Customized Training and Technical Support Entrepreneur

InFoPeople provides outstanding training and support services to participating public libraries. The level of training and support sophistication provided by InFoPeople comes after several years of "in-trenches" development, trial and error, and devoted staff. Other organizations throughout the state could benefit substantially from the technical and training services of InFoPeople.

InFoPeople could expand its technical and training support services to organizations beyond public libraries for profit. For example, for a fee, InFoPeople could:

- Provide technical support and training services to organizations other than public libraries (e.g., local/state government agencies, non-profit organizations);
- Develop customized training programs for libraries and other organizations; and/or,
- Provide technical consultation and planning services.

In this scenario, the State Library could establish a contract with InFoPeople to provide a minimum level of training and technical support services for public libraries.

Redesigning InFoPeople

Based on current technology initiatives in the state -- e.g., GLI, E-rate, InFoPeople, and Library of California -- and findings from the evaluation project data collection activities, it is possible to redesign InFoPeople in a number of ways to meet the new technology challenges of the state. The strategies and recommendations below identify some of the alternatives for a redesigned InFoPeople.

Support the Library of California and Other Technology Initiatives

At present, California is in the midst of multiple library technology initiatives -- Universal Service Fund (E-rate), InFoPeople, Library of California, and Gates Library Initiative, to name a few -- involving public and other types of libraries throughout California. Each of these initiatives has differing and evolving goals:

- Creating a statewide backbone and network-based services (Library of California);
- Providing discounted telecommunications services and equipment (E-rate);
- Connecting public libraries to the Internet (InFoPeople); and,
- Connecting public libraries that serve poverty communities to the Internet (Gates Library Initiative).

Each of these initiatives has their own application processes, reporting requirements, qualification requirements, and goals and objectives. There is a need for a program that coordinates these various technology initiatives so as to maximize the benefit of each for the state of California.

InFoPeople, with its large training and support programs and "name brand recognition" could become the consultant to state's libraries, schools, and State Library for these various initiatives. In doing so, InFoPeople:

- Provides the State Library with technical, managerial, and administrative support for existing and future technology initiatives;
- Assists libraries to apply for and meet the requirements of the technology initiatives;
- Assists public and other libraries to connect to the Internet through technology planning activities;
- Provides training workshops and support services for California libraries; and,
- Continues to develop and maintain specialized digital content such as the *Librarians' Index to the Internet*.

In this role, InFoPeople assumes day-to-day technical assistance and management of California's technology initiatives.

An issue for the State Library to consider during its decision-making process is the apparent and/or potential overlap of various technology initiatives. For example, California recently received $11 million from the Gates Library Initiative (GLI) "for the purchase of computers, Internet access, and training for public libraries in under served communities throughout California" (*Library Journal*, 1999). Although GLI specifically targets public libraries that serve underserved/poverty communities, GLI provides essentially the same services as does InFoPeople. As such, the State Library needs to consider the role of InFoPeople in the broader context of various California technology initiatives.

Expand Digital and Network-Based Resources

Increasingly, as California's libraries connect to the Internet, there is a need for digital content – in the form of culled Internet resources, online databases, and unique digital collections. InFoPeople is well positioned to serve as the state's digital content coordinator and organizer by:

- Expanding the *Librarians' Index to the Internet* (LII) to provide various services such as interactive state-wide reference and referral;
- Working with local libraries to enhance locally unique resources to be made available on local websites (which could then be linked across the state via LII); and/or,
- Developing and negotiating a range of statewide licensing agreements to provide statewide access to electronic resources made available through the Library of California or via other mechanisms.

This approach would provide public libraries and other state-based organizations with assessed topical Internet content, statewide database resources, and assistance in developing digital content.

Statewide Data Coordinator, Collector, and Reporter

The complexity and multi-dimensional nature of technology planning, infrastructure development, implementation, and use requires the State Library to have up-to-date data that is reported in a useful way for decision-making purposes. At present, data collection activities that inform the development of InFoPeople, the Gates Library Initiative, the E-rate, and the Library of California are neither comprehensive, nor easily accessible, nor integrated.

The State Library requires a management information system that:

- Collects a range of data in a comprehensive and coordinated fashion that cuts across the various technology initiatives in California;
- Stores the data in a single database that permits various views, extrapolations, and manipulation of the data; and,
- Reports the various data analysis activities in a format that supports State Library technology decision-making activities.

Using the various data collection effort InfoPeople currently has initiated for its project as a base, InFoPeople can expand its role to be the unit responsible for developing procedures to collect statewide data related to the delivery, use, and maintenance of information technologies in California's libraries.

An additional benefit to such a database is that it would allow public libraries to benchmark themselves against other similar libraries throughout the state and incorporate such data into local decision-making activities.

As part of this strategy, InFoPeople would advise the State Library on the data collection needs of various library activities. Data elements would include the need to measure various aspects of technology use and implementation, such as the:

- Location and type of workstations by a number of geographic and socioeconomic factors such as poverty, population of legal service area, and metropolitan status;
- Location and type of Internet connectivity by a number of geographic and socioeconomic factors such as poverty, population of legal service area, and metropolitan status;
- Physical location (geocoding) of library facilities to determine underserved populations;
- Internal and external library networking capabilities by a number of geographic and socioeconomic factors such as poverty, population of legal service area, and metropolitan status;
- Internet and technology cost factors such as workstations, networking, telecommunications, staffing, and content development, to name a few;
- Technology training needs of librarians and library staff;
- Funding/support each library received from various technology initiatives such as GLI, E-rate, InFoPeople, and Library of California;
- Network traffic measures and web statistics for participating agencies and libraries; and,
- Public access workstation use by users, to include the types and nature of their information seeking activities.

These data elements would provide the State Library with a robust database from which to extract technology and Internet costs, use, training needs, and technology infrastructure readiness by various key demographic elements such as poverty, population of legal service area, and metropolitan status (e.g., rural, suburban, urban). Such data would provide the State Library with trend statistics, thus enabling the library to note any trends by a variety of elements - for example, that libraries serving poverty communities of greater than 20% do not have local area networks, or that poverty areas of greater than 40% do not have a library facility within 20 miles. This type of data would enable the State Library to develop and/or modify technology initiatives to better meet the needs of various library and/or community-based groups.

Collaborate with Other State Programs and Agencies

Public access to advanced digital services and technologies is a statewide issue, not just that of the State Library or InFoPeople. The respect InFoPeople enjoys, coupled with the technical and training expertise and experience, provides a solid foundation on which the state can build a variety of statewide technology and Internet-based initiatives.

InFoPeople could work with education, police, welfare/social agencies, economic development, parks and recreation, and/or other state or local government agencies to promote the use of libraries and the Internet -- as well as other community-based public access points -- as a means of accomplishing the mission and goals of these other agencies.

Subsume InFoPeople into Other State Library Activities

The primary goal of InFoPeople was to connect public libraries to the Internet through the provision of workstation and connectivity grants. As the technology needs of the state become more sophisticated, and public library connectivity reaches near saturation, it is possible to end InFoPeople as now defined and incorporate various components of the "old" InFoPeople into other State Library initiatives.

Fold InFoPeople into Other State Library Projects

Given that a substantial percentage of California public libraries received workstations and training through the InFoPeople initiative, the State Library can consider the project a success and end the initiative as now constructed and implemented.

In doing so, the State Library releases the staff and financial resources devoted to InFoPeople and is able to put those resources towards other technology-based initiatives such as the Library of California. An issue to consider here, as discussed in the *Support the Library of California and Other Technology Initiatives* section, is the seeming overlap between the InFoPeople project and the Gates Library Initiative (*Library Journal*, 1999).

IMPORTANCE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

As this report suggests, the State Library is beset with a broad range of opportunities to develop, reinvent, or create various types of programs that draw upon the InFoPeople experience. Indeed, the investigators believe it is essential for the State Library to recognize the broad extent to which it is confronted with opportunities and to consider the degree to which the various opportunities support the short-term goals and long term mission of the State Library. The investigators are also aware of the limited staff and other resources available at the State Library to manage these and related future efforts.

Two major opportunity areas are the awards from the GLI and the implementation of the Library of California <http://www.library.ca.gov/html/loc.html>. One might think of the possible opportunities discussed with those two projects and others identified in this chapter as part of a broader "Technology Initiatives Portfolio" that the State Library is developing. The State Library may need to regard the holdings in this portfolio on a continuum from least important to most important. The guiding criteria for making such decisions are the mission and goals for the State Library. Thus, the State Library may need to review, refine, and rethink its mission, vision, and values listed at <http://www.library.ca.gov/html/cslgen1.html> for *specific priorities, goals, and objectives* in the evolving global networked environment.

The investigators expect that more detailed planning than that appearing on the State Library website may address such priorities. Nonetheless, the evaluation of the InFoPeople project suggests the following strategic planning considerations for future State Library programs:

- Human resources: There appears to be limited staff and resources available to manage the range of State Library initiatives and programs – and this was prior to the state obtaining the GLI and E-rate awards.
- Rapid change: The options and opportunities for programs in the Technology Initiatives Portfolio will continue to change and evolve rapidly as the information technology and telecommunications environment also changes.
- Numerous opportunities: With the expanse of opportunities that confront the State Library, specifying goals and objectives are essential -- the State Library cannot be all things to all people just as the public libraries cannot be all things to all people.
- Engaging public libraries: In choosing which initiatives to promote in its Technology Initiatives Portfolio, the State Library will need to select those programs that enable public libraries to help themselves – the State Library will never have the resources or staff to address all the needs identified in the library community.
- Setting priorities: There is a need to determine clearly which programs are *most* important, develop specific strategies for identifying those programs, and to provide adequate resources for the selected programs. Too many initiatives receiving too little support and management may result in the State Library being spread too thin to provide adequate leadership.
- Maintain flexible focus: The experience of the investigators in managing such an array of statewide opportunities is to focus on fewer programs, be as specific as possible about the intended outcomes of those programs, ensure that there is wide understanding as to what the programs will do and who will benefit, and be flexible during implementation as the technology and participants change.

Through these considerations is the concern that ongoing evaluation and assessment of the impact of the initiatives occurs so that the State Library can better document and justify the resources in support of the program and the impacts that result from those initiatives. Such evaluation is also essential so that future program initiatives can profit from the lessons learned in earlier efforts.

Although it is beyond the scope of this particular study to assess statewide planning efforts for enhancing public access to networked services and resources through public libraries, the State Library may wish to review the mechanisms in place that support such planning activities. Typically, such efforts include participation from a number of audiences within the state government, the public library community, local government, and others. But clearly, given the range of opportunities confronting the State Library and the California public library community, explicit priorities and objectives for statewide program initiatives are essential.

MOVING FORWARD

This chapter presents the State Library with numerous options for the future development and operation of InFoPeople based on the various data collection activities of the evaluation project. The State Library should not view the options as either "all or nothing," nor should the State Library consider these recommendations as definitive. Rather, the State Library needs to review and consider these recommendations in the broader context of California's rapidly evolving and developing technology initiatives such as the Library of California, E-rate, Gates Library Initiative, and InFoPeople.

The central issue facing the State Library is that of creating, managing, implementing, maintaining, and coordinating technology initiatives that have the ability to:

- Provide a sophisticated technology and connectivity infrastructure;
- Support the development and evolution of electronic networked services and content;
- Maximize the benefits of connectivity to the citizens of California while minimizing the costs of such services; and,
- Stimulate creativity and innovation in the library community to participate in the building of California's digital infrastructure.

The recommendations provided in this chapter serve as a frame of reference for the State Library to use as the library considers the future technology needs of the state's libraries and user communities.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 2-1 Schedule of Onsite Evaluation Interviews

Monday February 22

Chuck McClure and Joe Ryan conducted interviews at the Oceanside Public Library, Oceanside, CA

Agenda

9:00-10:00 Tour of Library and Community Computer Center with Patty Morrison, InFoPeople Liaison
10:00-10:30 Meeting with Assistant Director Deborah Polich Location: Library Board Room
10:30-11:00 Meeting with InFoPeople Liaison, Patty Morrison Location: Library Board Room
11:00-11:15 Meeting with Library Director, Jose Aponte
11:15-Noon Meeting with Library's service providers: Margaret L. Taylor Adult Services/Collection Coordinator; Donna Arnold, Support Services Manager Barbara Sullivan, Branch Manager; Mary Cappadonna, Librarian II; Patricia Horn, Reference Librarian; Addie Sealey, Community Computer Center trainer; Jeff Harding, Community Computer Center trainer; Demetra Wilkerson, Community Computer Center trainer; Location: Community Rooms adjacent to library
12:00 to 2:00 Working lunch with area librarians involved in InFoPeople Project: EllenRiley (Poway) Sandy Howsley (Vista Library), Sue Swisher (Serra Cooperative Library System), Lowell Waxman (San Diego Public Library, Linda Vista Branch), Margaret Taylor (Oceanside), Patty Morrison (Oceanside); Location: Community Rooms adjacent to library
2:00-2:30 Users meetings Met with 4 users. Interview with James Jones, Computer Center Supervisor
2:30-3:00 Meeting with local officials: Library Board of Trustees (8), City Council Member Carol McCauley, Location: Library Board Room
3:00 to 3:30 Exit interview with Patty Morrison, InFoPeople Liaison, Location: Library Heritage Room
7:00PM Dinner/Interview with Holly Hinman, InFoPeople Director and Wayne Pearson Cerritos Public Library Director in La Palma, CA.

32 people interviewed.

Tuesday February 23

8:00AM Breakfast interview with Cheryl Gould member of InFoPeople.

Chuck McClure and Joe Ryan conducted interviews at Cerritos Public Library, Cerritos CA

Agenda

9:00-9:30 Library Tour - Stanley Strauss
9:30-10:00 Meeting with City Librarian - Waynn Pearson
10:00-Noon Meeting with Project Liaison and Administrative Services Librarian - Stanley Strauss
Noon-2:00 Working lunch (catered in library) with Surrounding Area Librarians; Mary Anderson, County of Los Angeles Library System; Teri Garza, Orange County Library System; Thad Phillips, Downey City Library; Caroline Matz, City of Commerce Library; Sam Standring, Community Partner for Fullerton Public Library; Nancy Messineo, Long Beach Public Library; Joyce Albers, Los Angeles Public Library; Becky Ellis - Electronic Information Services Librarian; Alana Krause - Library Assistant – Systems
2:00-3:00 Becky Ellis - Electronic Information Services Librarian; Alana Krause - Library Assistant – Systems; Interviewed two library users
3:00-3:30 Exit Interview - Waynn Pearson

13 people interviewed.

Wednesday February 24

Chuck McClure and Joe Ryan conducted interviews at the Kern County Library, Beale Memorial Branch, Bakersfield, CA

Agenda

9:00-9:15 Library Tour with Norm Hutcherson (Southwest Branch Manager and InFoPeople Liaison), Louann Nickerson (Head of Reference for Beale Branch and County), and Nila Stearns (Beale Reference Librarian, Beale InfoPeople project contact)
9:30-10:00 Diane Duquette, Kern County Library Director
10:00-11:00 County Internet Team: Norm Hutcherson, Louann Nickerson, Nila Stearns
11:00-12:00 Regional librarians -- Barbara Swanson (in-town Branches), Kristie Coons (Support Services), Sherry Gomez (Adult Services), Mary Jane Weerts (Rathbun Branch Supervisor), Georgia Wages (Children's Services) and two members of the reference department staff from the Beale
11:00-12:00 At the same time meet Mel Gibbons, Kern County Library budget analyst

12:00-2:00 Lunch with Diane Duquette, Mel Gibbons, Nila Stearns, Louann Nickerson, Norm Hutcherson, Lorie Barker (Delano branch), Ramon Baraza (Lamont branch), Aileen Gonzales (Lamont), Sandy Yoon (Northeast), Catherine Edgecomb (Taft), and Judy Knox (Wasco)
2:00-2:30 Meet with three library users
2:30 Exit interview with Diane Duquette, Norm Hutcherson , Nila Stearns, and Louann Nickerson

20 people interviewed.

Thursday February 25

John Bertot and Joe Ryan conducted interviews at Alameda County Public Library, Fremont CA

Agenda

9:00 - 9:30 Tour of Fremont Main Library with Gary Morrison, Young Adult Services Librarian
9:30-10:00 Meeting with Deputy County Librarian, Joy Cadone
10:00-11:00 Meeting with Joan Galvez, InFoPeople Project Liaison
11:00-12:00 Meeting with Key Library Staff & Community Partners; Rayme Meyer, Reference Supervisor, Fremont Main Library; Bill Goldstein, Infopeople Contact, Fremont Main Library; Karen Aurelio, Community Partner, Fremont Main Library; Elizabeth Silva, Branch Manager, Newark Library; Lee Jouthas, Infopeople Contact, Pleasanton Library; George Anderson, Community Partner, Pleasanton Library; Linda Harris, Branch Manager, Union City Library; Ab Copeland volunteer; Bill ? volunteer
12:00-2:00 Lunch Meeting with Librarians from Surrounding Area: Julie Casamajor, Livermore Public Library; Mar Jennings, Contra Costa County Library; Linda Phillips, Contra Costa County Library; Lani Yoshimura, Santa Clara County Library, Gilroy Branch; Donna Greenberg, Alameda City Library; Cheryl Armstrong,Hayward Public Library.
2:00-3:00 Meeting with Local Users: Andy Kerr, docent at Fremont Main Library Tom Parker, Fremont Main patron; Idioma Herman, Fremont Main patron; Craig Cohen, Fremont Main patron; Barbara (I don't have her last name), Newark patron
3:00 Exit interview with Joan Galvez, InFoPeople Project Liaison

21 people interviewed.

Friday February 26

John Bertot and Joe Ryan conducted interviews at Woodland Public Library, Woodland CA

Agenda

9:00 - 12:00 Marie E. Bryan, Library Services Director; Brandon McClintock, Librarian III; Sue Peterson, Library Technical Asst. II; Carol Beckham, Children's Librarian II; Barbara Schlundt, LTA II; Melton Losoya, Mayor, City of Woodland;
12:00-2:00 Luncheon Meeting: Jeanne Amos, El Dorado County Library; Kathleen Connors, Folsom Public Library; Roxanna Darley, Sutter County Library; Linda ?, staff member, Sutter County Library; Gerald Maginnity, Coordinator of the Mountain Valley Library System; Marilyn Corcoran, Yolo County Library; Sharon Troxel, Roseville Public Library (Maidu Branch)
2:00-2:30 Meeting with four library users
7:00 Dinner interview with Carole Leita, InfoPeople Web Manager

18 people interviewed.

Monday March 1

John Bertot conducted interviews at the California State Library, Sacramento, CA

Agenda

9:00-10:00 Mark Parker
10:00-11:30 InFoPeople Task Group including: Kathy Low (previous program monitor), Bessie Condos Tichauer (Youth and YA consultant), Carol Gilbert (original primary consultant), Jay Cunningham (LSTA Program Coordinator), Barbara Will (Library of California)
11:30-1:00 Lunch with the Task Group
1:00-1:45 Liz Gibson, Bureau Chief
1:45-2:30 Pat Earnest (Planning Consultant and FSCS coordinator)

8 people interviewed.

Joe Ryan conducted interviews at the Plumas County Public Library, Quincy CA with Margaret Miles, County Librarian and Judy Wallace, Library Director and two library users at the Greenville Public Library, Greenville, CA.

4 people interviewed.

Total interviewed: 12 people.

Tuesday March 2

Joe Ryan conducted an exit Interview with Holly Hinman at Cerritos Public Library, Cerritos CA

Total interviewed: 1 person.

Total Number of People Interviewed at all Sites: 117

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Appendix 2-2 Brief Profiles of Libraries Visited

Library:	Oceanside Public Library (OPL) 330 N. Coast Highway Oceanside, CA 92054 Phone: (760) 966-4690 WWW: http://www.ci.oceanside.ca.us/library/ Library Director: José Aponte <jAponte@ci.oceanside.ca.us> Project Liaison: Patricia Morrison <pmorrison@ci.oceanside.ca.us>
Location:	Oceanside Public Library (OPL) is a department of the city of Oceanside, and a member of the Serra Cooperative Library System of San Diego and Imperial Counties. Oceanside, a coastal city, has a large military population due to its proximity to Camp Pendleton Marine Corps base. Oceanside is the most northern and the third fastest growing city in the County of San Diego, located 36 miles north of downtown San Diego. Total employment for the county was 1,145,200, unemployment was 7.2 % (1994) below the state's rate of 8.6 percent.
Facilities:	OPL consists of the Civic Center (Main) Library (30,000 square feet), the Old Mission Branch Library (12,000 square feet), a Community Computer Center (1997 California Cities, Award for Excellence winner, http://www.ci.oceanside.ca.us/Library/ccc/cccntr.html), an Adult Learning Center, and two bookmobiles.
Hours Open:	Civic Center (Main) Library opens 52.5, Mission branch 42.5, Computer Center 63, Adult Learning Center 50.5 hours per week
Staff:	22 full time and 54 part time employees
Budget:	1998/99 is $4,104,000, Training: $3,120, MIS/Phone: $59,720
Collection:	306,000 books, 800+ magazines, 40 newspapers, 10,000+ Spanish language materials and 5000+ video cassettes.
Circulation:	Annual circulation is 652,894 of which 38% is children's materials, 7% Spanish materials using a GEAC Libs 100 circulation system (installation of a new system is planned for fiscal 1999/2000). Materials cataloged on RLIN with holdings sent to OCLC.
Reference:	115,248 reference questions answered
Library cards:	127,700
Population:	153,869 (1998), 23% Hispanic, 59% White, 7% Black, 6% Asian and other
Internet Activities	Awarded first InFoPeople grant 3/94 was the only city government department with Internet access. Additional InFoPeople awards 8/94 (1), 8/95 (2), 3/97 assistive technology workstation. The library offered 10,199 hours of Internet InfoPeople access at two locations last year: three computers at the Civic Center Library and two at the Old Mission Branch. In addition, 37 computer are used for Internet access at the Library's Community Computer Center. There is no charge for computer or Internet use, a $.15 per page printing charge, fax and scanner are available for use. Internet use is unfiltered with policies (including sanctions) and procedures regulating use. 85,985 people used the Community Computer Center in 1998, averaging 240 per day, and registering 4,546 new users, 15 volunteers offered 201 free computer classes, and 2,010 people received computer software training. The library is one of 32 libraries in the state to be a part of the Library of California project. Have conducted an Internet users survey.
Also of Interest:	There are approximately 1,500 members in the Friends of the Oceanside Public Library. The Friends fund-raising efforts provide about $40,000 per year to the Library for purchase of materials, a series of cultural performing arts programs, and programs for children and young adults. Thirteen hundred children and Young Adults were involved in the Summer Reading Program this past summer. There are 200 library volunteers.

Library:	Cerritos Public Library 18025 Bloomfield Avenue Cerritos, California 90703 Phone: (562) 916-1350 Fax: (562) 916-1375 WWW: http://library.ci.cerritos.ca.us/ Catalog: WWW: http://clio.ci.cerritos.ca.us/ Library Director: Waynn Pearson<waynn_pearson@ci.cerritos.ca.us> Project Liaison: Becky Ellis <Becky_Ellis@ci.cerritos.ca.us>
Location:	Suburb of Los Angeles
Facilities:	A winner of the American Institute of Architects/American Library Association Award of Excellence. The library is in the planning stage of a 25,000 sq. ft. facility expansion.
Hours Open:	67 hours per week
Staff:	
Budget:	Materials: $ 53,000 Electronic Information $ 23,500 Non-print $290,175 Books Materials Total: $366,675
Collection:	46,000 books in the adult collection and 50,000 books in the children's area, 300 periodical titles, 2000 videocassettes; 500 audiocassettes, and over 2700 compact disc, a references collection of 10,000 volumes
Circulation:	Annual circulation is 683,347 (1995/96)
Reference:	144,655 reference questions answered in 1995/96
Library cards:	48,549 cardholders use the library regularly, of these, 38,416 are residents and city staff members, and 10,133 are non-residents who pay an annual fee.
Population:	53,240 residents (1990), 44% Asian, 35.8% White, 12.5 Hispanic, 7.2% Black; $59,076 median income. For further information see: http://www.ci.cerritos.ca.us/atoz/demographics.html
Internet Activities	16 computer workstations, "mobile" Laptop based LAN for class use, users may electronically submit reference questions (http://library.ci.cerritos.ca.us/new_library.html), access policy. The principal InFoPeople training site for southern California. Have conducted an Internet users survey.
Also of Interest:	Pat Nixon's girlhood home

Library:	Kern County Library Beale Memorial Branch (Administrative headquarters), 701 Truxtun Ave., Bakersfield, CA 93301-4816, Phone: (805) 861-2390 Fax: (805) 631-9439 WWW: http://www.netxn.com/~kclib/ Library Director: Diane Duquette <duquette@sjvls.lib.ca.us> Project Liaison: Norm Hutcherson <nhutcherson@yahoo.com> Community Plans Available Online: California City: http://www.infopeople.org/CP/KernCo/Cal.html Delano: http://www.infopeople.org/CP/KernCo/Del.html Frazier Park: http://www.infopeople.org/CP/KernCo/Fra.html Northeast: http://www.infopeople.org/CP/KernCo/NE.html Rosamond: http://www.infopeople.org/CP/KernCo/Ros.html Shafter: http://www.infopeople.org/CP/KernCo/Sha.html Southwest: http://www.infopeople.org/CP/KernCo/SW.html Taft: http://www.infopeople.org/CP/KernCo/Taft.htm Wasco: http://www.infopeople.org/CP/KernCo/Was.html
Location:	Kern County is California's third-largest county in land area, covering 8,073 square miles (more area than the state of Massachusetts). About one-third of the county is situated on the flat valley floor at the extreme southern end of the great San Joaquin Valley. Bakersfield, the county seat, is located 110 miles due north of Los Angeles. Kern County Library System is a member of the San Joaquin Valley Library System.
Facilities:	26 branch libraries; Bakersfield: 8 branches (Baker, Beale[1], Northeast[2], Southwest[2], Holloway-Gonzales, Rathbun[2], Wilson, and the Fire Department.) 1 bookmobile Area: 18 branches (Shafter[2], Wasco[2], McFarland,Delano[2], Ridgecrest[1], Wofford Heights, Kernville, Kern River Valley (Lake Isabella), Mojave, Tehachapi, California City[2], Boron, Wanda Kirk (Rosamond)[2], Taft[2], Arvin, Lamont[1], and Frazier Park[2].) 1 bookmobile [InFoPeople workstations in brackets]
Hours Open:	Beale and Southwest Branches open 60 hours per week; all totaled, the 26 branches are open 1,103 hours per week.
Staff:	143 regular staff -- 28 FTE Librarians, 30 Technical Assistants, 2 special professionals, and 78 FTE other.
Budget:	$6.6 million annual budget, total expenditures $12+ million per year. Communication, telephone: $87,495, training: $2,811
Collection:	1,043,900 books; 550 magazine subscriptions
Circulation:	1,938,621 million items checked out during FY 97/98; 130,000 yearly attendance at library programs; Over 20,000 persons using the library each week.
Reference:	590,000 reference questions answered during FY 97/98
Library cards:	270,015 registered users; 235,569 (1997)
Population:	640,184; 1% American Indian, 3% Asian, 6% black, 31% Hispanic, and 59% White. Per capita income (1995) $13,112
Internet Activities	61 workstations: 15 from InFoPeople, 49 from Kern County or the Gates Foundation. Beale, Lamont, and Ridgecrest: InfoPeople Cycle 1. Shafter, Delano, California City, Rosamond, Taft, Frazier Park, Northeast, and Southwest: InfoPeople Cycle 2. No Kern County Library branch locations were selected for cycle 3. Holloway Gonzales, in southeast Bakersfield, was recently equipped with additional computers, software, and an independent Windows NT network under the auspices of a Gates Foundation grant. Currently all Kern County Library branch locations (except Kernville) have a minimum of 2 or more public access Internet terminals available for public use in their location. Internet use guidelines can be found at: http://www.netxn.com/~kclib/disclaim.html. A staff training aid that was used for library staff during last months regional meetings can be found at: http://www.netxn.com/~kclib/demo.html. Video conferencing facilities are available. Have

Library:	Alameda County Public Library 2450 Stevenson Blvd. Fremont CA 94538-2326 Phone: (510) 745-1500 Fax: (510) 793-2987 WWW: http://aclibrary.org/ Library Director: Linda Wood <lwoadm@alam1.lib.co.alameda.ca.us> Project Liaison: Joan Galvez <jgaadm@alam1.lib.co.alameda.ca.us> Community Plans Available Online: Albany: http://www.infopeople.org/CP/AlaCo/Albany.html Centerville: http://www.infopeople.org/CP/AlaCo/Ctv.html Dublin: http://www.infopeople.org/CP/AlaCo/Dublin.html Newark: http://www.infopeople.org/CP/AlaCo/Newark.html
Location:	In the San Francisco Bay Area, member BALIS, covers 571.8 square miles
Facilities:	Has a main library (Fremont), 10 branches, and 1 bookmobile. Branch libraries in the cities of Albany (15,220 sq. ft), Dublin (15,005 sq. ft), Newark (15,000 sq. ft), Pleasanton (30,000 sq. ft, no longer part of service area), and Union City (12,000 sq. ft.) and the unincorporated communities of Castro Valley (10,239 sq. ft.) and San Lorenzo (11,867 sq. ft). In Fremont are the Main Library (68,532 sq. ft.) which shares a building with Library Administration (28,981 sq. ft.) and branch libraries in the districts of Centerville (6,000 sq. ft.), Irvington (5,760 sq. ft.) and Niles (2,152 sq. ft.).
Hours Open:	In 1998, 328 hours total for the system per week, 45 hours at the Main branch at Fremont. In 1992/93, the libraries were opened 478 hours. This represents a 31% reduction. A five year plan goal is to increase hours by at least 50% system wide.
Staff:	320 (212 FTE), 1998/99. In 1992/93 there were 435.
Budget:	1998/99 budget of $15,372,622. The County Library is funded primarily by local property taxes, with additional revenue from State and Federal grants and contracts with cities for additional open hours and services. The Board of Supervisors allocates a portion of a utility users and business license tax which is collected only in the unincorporated areas of the County to the Library for service in the unincorporated areas. The Alameda County Library Foundation and active Friends or Library League groups in each community support library programs and services.
Collection:	1,138,533 books, 67,432 audio/visual, 2,970 periodicals, 183, newspapers. In 1991/92 105,557 items were added to the collection, in 1997/98 only 59,845 items were added, a reduction of 43%.
Circulation:	1997/98 3,536,764 an increase of 3.94% over previous year, 6.53 items per capita for the system.
Reference:	Reference requests 448,150 for the system (1997/98). 1997/98 system-wide gate count was 1,696, 379.
Library cards:	Total 288,787, 240,169 resident, 48,618 non-resident which is 16.84% of the total (1998); 1997 there were 315, 076.
Population:	541, 350
Internet Activities	Total number of Internet accessible workstations are: 13 WWW access stations for the public (mostly from InFoPeople; 53 WWW access stations for staff (from 5-year plan, network project, first phase), 78 gateway public OPAC stations (with text access to Internet), 121 staff gateway OPAC stations. In the next few months will upgrade to T1 (PacBell) and add 67 public WWW access stations and 49 staff WWW access stations. These additions will replace the text only access stations. In 1997/98, the library gateway received 357,926 logins averaging 12.83 minutes. Five year plan states by 12/31/98 revise policies, by 1/31/99 develop plan for staff training, by 2/28/99 add 33 public access workstations, by 2/28/99 upgrade administrative LAN to Windows. First InFoPeople grants in 1994/1995 provided public access to the

	WWW in January 1995 at Fremont Main, Pleasanton, San Lorenzo and Union City. Infolane was the ISP at $360 per terminal per year. The Castro Valley Library started to provide public access in 1995 with donations of equipment and connect time from Friends of the Library, Rotary Club and Viacom. In 1996, revised WWW home page and added WWW access at 4 more branches (Newark, Dublin, Albany and Centerville) with InFoPeople Cycle 2 grants. Added a workstation at Fremont Main with adaptive devices for the blind and visually-impaired with an InFoPeople grant in 1997. In 1998 started parent training on the Internet, began installation of WAN and 5-year planning process. Presently, InFoPeople workstations are at the Albany, Centerville, Dublin, Fremont Main (2 + 1 donated by TCI Cable), Newark, Pleasanton (2), San Lorenzo and Union City branches. Active Internet docent programs are in place at the Albany, Dublin, Fremont Main, Newark and San Lorenzo branches. Over the past 4 years and continuing, many staff have attended InFoPeople workshops. In October - December 1998 provided in-house staff training on Netscape, searching the WWW, and on the webpac catalog. This was in anticipation of expanded access with the new network. Recently reviewed existing Internet access policy with the Alameda County Library Advisory Commission and made decision to filter workstations in children's areas of the libraries but not to monitor children's use of filtered or unfiltered stations. Have conducted an Internet users survey.

Library:	Woodland Public Library 250 First Street Woodland CA 95695-3411 Phone: (530) 661-5981 WWW: http://www.ci.woodland.ca.us/library/Default.htm Library Director: Marie E. Bryan <woodlib@mother.com>
Location:	Small city north of Sacramento, in the Central Valley, member Mountain Valley Library System (MVLS)
Facilities:	Located in one Spanish-style 1907 Carnegie building
Hours Open:	50 hours per week
Staff:	9 full time (including 3 professional librarians), 10 part time (including 1 professional librarian)
Budget:	FY 1998/99 $789,000 + $87,000 for Literacy Service, spends about $16 per capita Training: $1,300
Collection:	85,000 books, 237 magazine and 9 newspaper subscriptions
Circulation:	246,927 (1997-98), about 5 books per year per resident
Library cards:	25,579 active library cards
Population:	43,500, median age is the same as the state as is % Hispanic (although there are less Asian and Black)
Internet Activities	InFoPeople begins 2/95. Initially charged $3.00 per hour of use now charges $1 per hour used. One of five libraries in CA to receive an adaptive technology grant from InFoPeople in 10/97. Presently pays $324.95 per month for ISDN access. Will soon switch to another ISP to significantly reduce cost. Currently participating in a project to link several libraries in the MVLS via an easy-to-use Z39.50 interface and upgrade its own LAN. Internet access policy available at: http://www.ci.woodland.ca.us/library/policy.htm

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Library:	Plumas County Public Library 445 Jackson Street Quincy CA 95971-9410 Phone: (530) 283-6310 WWW: http://www.psln.com/PCLibQ/ Library Director: Margaret Miles <PCLibQ@psln.com> Greenville Public Library 204 Ann Stree: P O Box 635 Greenville CA 95947 Phone(530)284-2742 Library Director: Judy Wallace
Location:	Located in the Feather River area in the heart of the Sierra Nevada and Cascade mountain ranges. 2,618 sq. mile area Member of the North State Cooperative Library System.
Facilities:	Includes: Quincy (HQ), Chester, Greenville, and Portola. Also provides services to Sierra County.
Hours Open:	40 hours (Quincy)
Staff:	10 people, totaling 7.8 FTE (this includes branches)
Budget:	1998-99 $361,536 Training: $2,500
Collection:	71,668 (as of 6/98)
Circulation:	105,138
Library cards:	13,431 (as of 6/98)
Population:	Quincy, the county seat, has a population of 5,000; the county has 22,022 people
Internet Activities	Computer and Internet usage policy available at: http://www.psln.com/PCLibQ/policy.html
Also of Interest:	

Appendix 2-3 Letter Scheduling Onsite Visit and Requesting Information

January 27, 1999

Dear Local Liaison;

Thank you for agreeing to participate in our site visits for the InfoPeople project evaluation. The purpose of this letter is to describe the nature of our visit to the Site Visit Library on Date in a bit more detail, provide additional information that may help you to organize the visit, ask for documentation on your library, and to ask for some logistical information to help us get there. I have sent a copy of this letter to the Library Director, as well.

Evaluation Team

The evaluation team consists of Chuck McClure, John Bertot and Joe Ryan. Chuck and Joe will be the team members visiting you. Joe will be handling the logistical details and would like to give you a call at (760) 966-4109 to answer any questions you might have after you read this letter regarding our visit. Could we schedule that call for Date, Pacific time? If that does not work please phone (number) or e-mail <e-mail address> Joe with an alternative time or phone number.

Tentative Schedule

Below is a tentative schedule and brief description for our visit so that you will know what to expect. These times are flexible depending on your local circumstances. The study team may need to meet separately with people in order to cover everyone.

1: 9:00-9:30AM Library Tour

We would like to have someone give us a brief library tour in order to get oriented to the facility, location of the Internet terminals, and a general sense of the place. With your permission we may take several photographs to jog our memories upon our return home.

2: 9:30 - 10:00AM Meeting with the Library Director or Designate

The objectives of this session are to obtain an administrative overview of your library's role in the project; review costs, benefits, and issues related to your involvement; identify specific impacts from involvement on the library, library staff, and the local community from involvement; and discuss the library's next steps in both the project and in providing public access to the Internet. We are especially interested in your views on the costs and benefits from participating in the project. Would you do it again if asked? Has participation really affected the community and how? Has the InfoPeople connection increased visibility and use of the library? What public access to the Internet measures you find particularly helpful and useful when talking with local officials and funders? Will you leverage this initial Internet connection and Internet services and expand them in the future?

3: 10:00 - 11:00 Meeting with Project Liaison

The objective of this session is to de-brief the person(s) most knowledgeable about the day-to-day operations of the project. During this session, the topics we would like to discuss are: What, were the major events, agreements, and actions connected with the project? What were the roles of the community plan and community partner in the project? What are the types of library users and the uses made of the service? What training did staff and users attend, was it effective? What are the impacts of the project on the library internal operations, services, (e.g., increases in point of use instruction, reference, document delivery), policies, staffing, and facilities? What impacts have there been on library users and their view of the library? What is your assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the InfoPeople project? What do you see as the next steps for the library to pursue?

4: 11:00 - 12:00 Noon Meeting with Key Library Staff, Community Partner, and Local Officials

The objective of this session is to interact with as many people as possible involved in the InfoPeople project at the library, critical is the Community partner if there was one at the library. We hope to conduct one-on-one interviews that might last an hour with key people like the community partner. But please invite ALL librarians, library staff and volunteers involved in making public access to the Internet possible at the library. These people might include: those who have received Internet training, anyone who has provided instruction or training to users; those involved in planning for or publicizing the service; anyone who has operated or used the InfoPeople connection; or established the library web page. If the numbers are large the two evaluation team members will interview these members of your staff in groups of 5-7 depending on the number of people involved. The meeting should be held in a meeting room or at a conference area in the library where we will not disturb anyone else. Should we need to break into small groups two meeting areas able to hold say 6-8 people should be adequate. Please ask the librarian participants to bring to the session any written documentation about their public access Internet service they are willing to share with us.

During this session, the topics we would like to discuss are: What were the key problems you faced, events, and agreements necessary to make the Internet accessible in your library? What was the role of the community partner? What kind of training does the library provide to users? To what degree do you (library staff) use the InfoPeople connection and for what do you use it? What type of training was provided to library staff? Did you participate in InfoPeople training sessions, what were they like? How would you describe the users and types of uses being made of the public access Internet connection? What were the things that worked in the InfoPeople project? Describe some of the most important successes and failures you have seen in using the InfoPeople connection? What are the most important benefits and impacts that have resulted to you,the library, and the community from having the InfoPeople connection? What were the things that were problematic? How did you measure success/failure? What do you see as next steps?

If possible we would like to briefly meet with one or two key local government officials involved in library funding decisions during this time period or after lunch. The objectives of this meeting is to assess how important these officials think library provision of public access to the Internet is? What is the competition for funding from other government units? How does this library service compare to the competitors? What measures of Internet service provision are meaningful to these officials? What are next steps for the library in this area that these officials might be willing to support?

5: Noon to 2:00PM Working Lunch with Surrounding Area Librarian Participants in InfoPeople Project

Please invite up to 5 librarians in neighboring communities that participated in the InfoPeople project to meet with us for a working lunch and discussion. We would be especially interested in meeting with the InfoPeople project liaisons at these libraries. The librarians can be directors or staff -- as long as they have some experience with InfoPeople and provision of the Internet services in their library.

Our first preference is for a box lunch arrangement at the library to maximize the time we have with our guests. But if this is not possible or appropriate please make reservations at a local restaurant for all of us -- the two of us on the evaluation team, yourself, plus however many agree to participate. We should probably all meet directly at the designated restaurant rather than at the library to save on time. The closer, quicker, and easier the restaurant is to get into and out of, the better! Tell everyone that the lunch is on me. We would expect to have lunch and return to the library by 1:45. We will pay for the lunch for everyone.

The same general topics that we listed for discussion with the staff will also be the topics that we will raise during lunch. So if they want to know the topics in advance, please feel free to provide them with the topics listed in item 4 above. It may be useful to remind them about the meeting and its location a couple of days prior to the time. Please ask the librarian participants to bring to the session any written documentation about their public access Internet service they are willing to share with us. This documentation might include general information about the library its size and statistics, planning documents, brochures, newspaper clippings, and budget (particularly as it relates to Internet service provision).

6: 2:00-3:00PM Meeting with Local Users, and Local Officials

This meeting is very important as a prime objective of the evaluation is to talk to users of the InfoPeople public access connections. Again, the meeting should be held in a meeting room or at a conference area in the library where we will not disturb anyone else. We will ask that someone from the library introduce the meeting and then leave.

We have met with library Internet users at a number of locations around the country and know that it can be difficult to get users to attend these sessions. We also know that local contact with users and a local strategy works best. What follows are some strategies that have worked for us and our local partners in the past. We would suggest that you start about two weeks in advance of our visit to arrange for users to attend this focus group session. We hope that you will be able to identify regular users of the InfoPeople Internet connection, that they are knowledgeable about the use of the connection, and willing to share their experiences with us. It is fine if they use the Internet from their home as long as they are users of the connection at the library too! Users can be young or old, students, whatever -- as long as they have used the library's InfoPeople connection and are willing to discuss their experiences. In fact, users of the InfoPeople project, but from other libraries in the area, are also welcome to participate in the session if possible.

There are a number of strategies to use in organizing this session. One is to have an announcement of the meeting, at the computer, asking users to participate in a discussion about their use of the InfoPeople Internet connection. Indicate that those interested should come to the reference desk to sign-up. Then get their name and phone number as confirmation. You should probably get about 15 users to agree to attend in advance as that usually results in about 9 that actually come. In conjunction with the above approach it is usually better to personalize the invitation by going to those using the Internet connection (especially users that you or the staff know) and asking them directly to participate. Then get their name and phone number as confirmation. Two-three days before the meeting, please give them all a reminder call letting them know we are looking forward to seeing them at the discussion session. Bribe them with the high quality cookies we will bring! Please stress to these users the importance of their participation as it is essential to document their views on the use and impact of providing this new Internet service. Indicate that information from the study will help the library plan for future Internet services and possibly help the library and the state obtain additional funding to support such services.

Typical topics we will discuss with the users are: How did they learn of the InfoPeople Internet connection? How often do they use the connection and what types of information resources and services do they use? Do they use it for professional, personal, or recreational reasons -- can they provide examples of specific uses and how those sources helped (or did not help) them? What have been the impacts and benefits of using the library's InfoPeople connection? Did they encounter any difficulties in using the workstation or the software? How might the InfoPeople Internet connection and services be improved? How have they learned to use the InfoPeople Internet connection? What do you recommend the library do to continue to improve this service? Do you think the local community would be willing to support the public access Internet connectivity directly?

This is a general flavor of the types of topics we will explore with them -- others may come up depending on their knowledge and interest. At 3:00 PM we will end the meeting and thank them very much!

We might also use this time segment to meet with local officials or library staff who could not make it to the morning session.

7: 3:00-3:30PM Exit Interview with Library Liaison or Library Director

This meeting is simply to tie-up any loose ends from the day's events and say a courtesy thank you to the Library Director if appropriate. We might need additional information, have some questions about the day, or otherwise need a "reality check." We hope to end close to this schedule because we will travel to our next site immediately after we finish with you.

Documentation

Prior to our coming to the library I would greatly appreciate it if you would send me a care package of information about the library and its Internet services. This could include: basic orientation materials and statistical information about your library (anything you think would be useful for us to know); planning documents related to past, present or future provision of public access Internet services; a budget (especially any cost items specifically related to the project); brochures related to the InfoPeople project; promotional information or news clippings about the project; and user logs or sign-up sheets, etc. Please send the care package to Joe Ryan-.

Also send a map with directions on how to find your library and where to park if it is not obvious. Your recommendation for a hotel/motel (with phone number) where we might stay for the night would also be helpful. Please fax me information.

I think the above about covers the information we need to provide you. If you have any questions please call Joe Ryan or e-mail or fax me. We appreciate your help with participating in the site visit. THANKS, and we are looking forward to meeting you at Time Date.

Sincerely,

Chuck McClure
John Bertot
Joe Ryan

Appendix 2-4 Brief Profile of InFoPeople

Organization:	Internet For People (InFoPeople)
Address:	WWW: http://www.infopeople.org/
Purpose:	InFoPeople gave the majority of California public libraries access to the equipment needed to get connected to the Internet, the training to be comfortable with the Internet and the skills necessary to locate basic information of interest to library users on the Internet, and resources to deal with the issues libraries face as they integrate this new service into traditional library service.
History:	Started in 1994, the Project is a partnership among the California State Library, the University of California Berkeley Library and participating local jurisdictions. For chronology see WWW: http://www.infopeople.org/Proj/history.html
Connectivity Program:	The project provides points of direct public access to the Internet in public libraries throughout the state of California. Presently there are ? libraries served by this program, cycle 1: ?, cycle 2: ?, cycle 3: ?. Participating Libraries: WWW: http://www.infopeople.org/liblist.html See also Policy and Use Survey: Workstation Number & Location (1997). WWW: http://www.infopeople.org/Survey/one.html
Training Program:	How many workshops have been given and any breakdown by year or type? InFoPeople. Workshops. WWW: http://www.infopeople.org/workshop.html
Web Services:	InFoPeople Web Page: http://www.infopeople.org/ Librarians' Index to the Internet: http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/InternetIndex/ A searchable, evaluated, and annotated subject directory of Internet resources selected for their usefulness to the public library user's information needs. The indexers are California librarians.
Staff:	Holly Hinman <hinmanh@infopeople.org> Project Manager Cheryl Gould <gouldc@infopeople.org> Project Assistant Carole Leita <leita@infopeople.org> Web Manager See Staff Contacts: http://www.infopeople.org/Proj/contacts.html State Library Staff: Mark Parker <mparker@library.ca.gov> Technology Coordinator, Library Development Services, State Library Related staff: Kathy Low (previous program monitor), Bessie Condos Tichauer (Youth and YA consultant), Carol Gilbert (original primary consultant), Jay Cunningham (LSTA Program Coordinator), Barbara Low (Library of California)
Budget:	Overall, a total of $6,429,650 of LSCA/LSTA money has been expended on InFoPeople beginning with the since 1992/1993 fiscal year.
Previous Evaluations:	InFoPeople. (1997). Policy and use survey. http://www.infopeople.org/ Survey/index.html California public libraries participating in the InFoPeople Project were surveyed for information about their public Internet access policies and use in mid-1997. Included is: Number & locations of Internet workstations, Internet software used, computer operating system & hardware, browser, hard drive & virus security, Internet connectivity & downloading, Internet use policy & privacy, training, e-mail & newsgroups, fees: printing, disks, use and community partner/volunteer activities. McClure, Charles R., Bertot, John Carlo and Rubin, Jeffrey H. (1998, December 8). InFoPeople surveys and quarterly statistics: Preliminary findings. Submitted to Peninsula Library System, San Mateo, CA. http://www.infopeople.org/Proj/eval/index.html InFoPeople Project Statistics. http://www.infopeople.org/project.html